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ABSTRACT

The development of the Bernard van Leer Foundation is recounted. The discussion illustrates general trends by means of selective project reviews and references to theoretical discussions which were prevalent in early childhood education during the period from 1965-1986. Also considered are activities encouraged by the foundation which have contributed to knowledge in the field. An introductory chapter is followed by chapters which focus on: (1) initial efforts of the foundation (1965-68) to support early childhood education projects, including four projects that illustrate the theory of compensation and the practical means of theory application; (2) developments that occurred when the importance of parent and community involvement was recognized (1969-72) and the foundation began to facilitate the development of innovative programs and information dissemination capacities; (3) beginnings (1973-76) of new directions for the 1980s; (4) the tremendous conceptual, project development, and funding growth that occurred (1977-80) when early childhood care was increasingly integrated into project activities; (5) the analysis of past experience (1981-82) and the development of a coherent policy for the 1980s; (6) initial implementation of that policy (1983-86); and (7) efforts to expand (1987-88) the work of the foundation, arguments raised at the time, and program directions for the 1990s. (RH)

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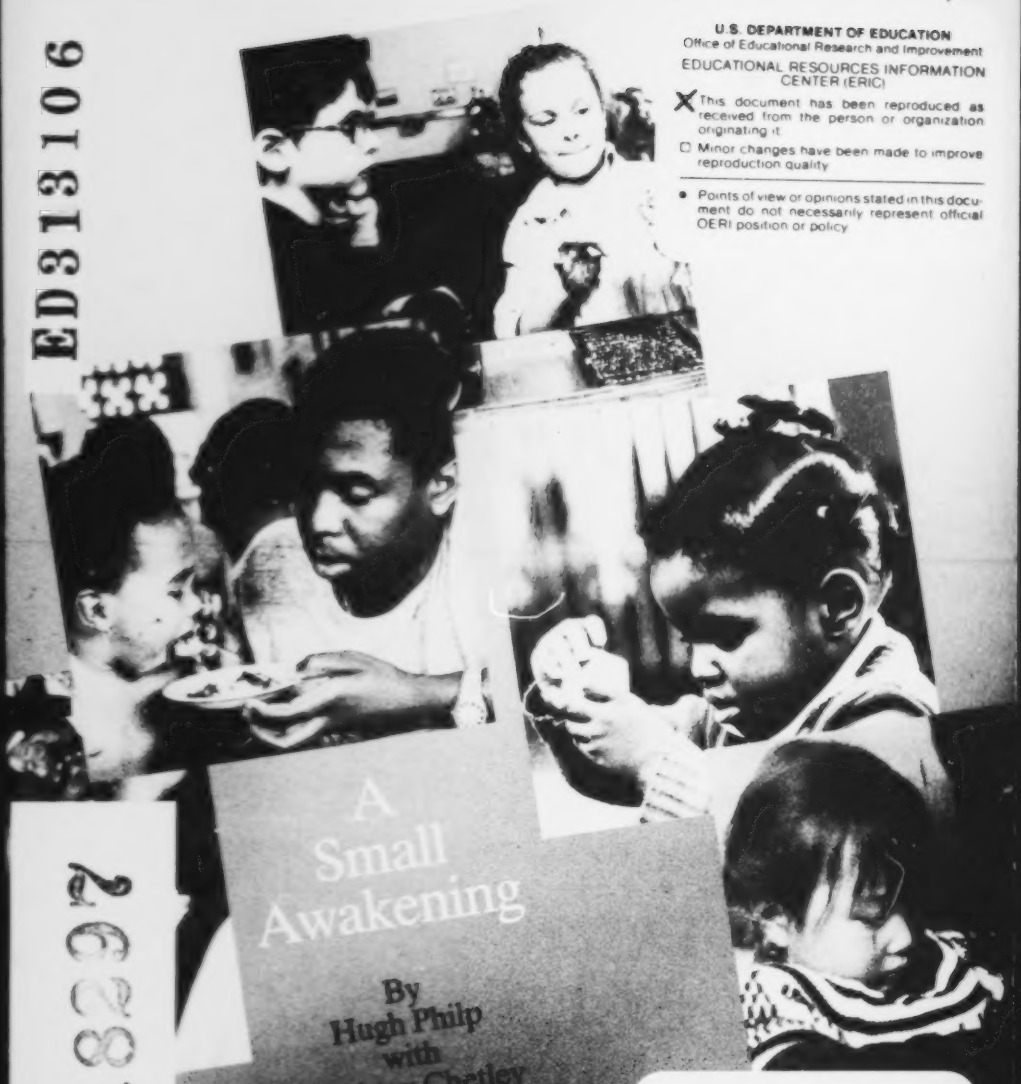

A Small Awakening

By
Hugh Philp
with
Andrew Chetley

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THE FOUNDATION

The Bernard van Leer Foundation, which bears the name of its founder, is an international, philanthropic and professional institution based in The Hague, The Netherlands. The Foundation's income is derived from the Van Leer Group of Companies, a worldwide industrial enterprise of which the Foundation is the principal beneficiary. Created in 1949 for broad humanitarian purposes, the Foundation now concentrates on the development of low-cost, community-based initiatives in the field of early childhood care and education for socially and culturally disadvantaged children from birth to eight years of age.

The Foundation provides financial support and professional guidance to governmental, academic and voluntary bodies operating projects to enable disadvantaged children to benefit fully from educational and social development opportunities. The Foundation currently supports over 150 projects in some 40 countries.

THE PROGRAMME

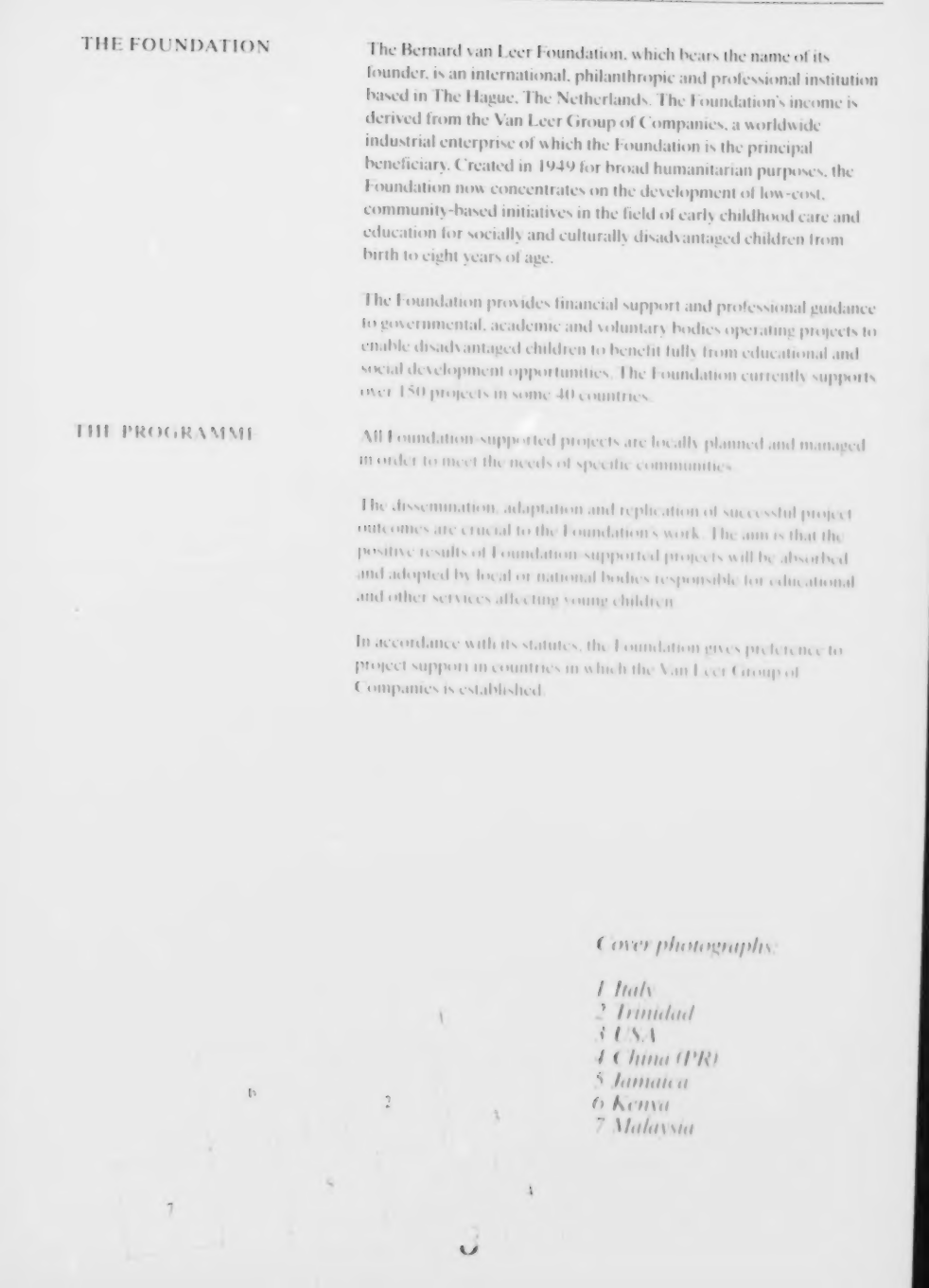
All Foundation-supported projects are locally planned and managed in order to meet the needs of specific communities.

The dissemination, adaptation and replication of successful project outcomes are crucial to the Foundation's work. The aim is that the positive results of Foundation-supported projects will be absorbed and adopted by local or national bodies responsible for educational and other services affecting young children.

In accordance with its statutes, the Foundation gives preference to project support in countries in which the Van Leer Group of Companies is established.

Cover photographs:

1 Italy
2 Trinidad
3 USA
4 China (PR)
5 Jamaica
6 Kenya
7 Malaysia



Bernard van Leer Foundation

A Small Awakening

The Work of the Bernard van Leer Foundation: 1965-1986

by Hugh Philp with Andrew Chetley

Much good is being done to the individual children in terms of their social awareness, their creativity, their awakening sense of the world in which they live. ... They represent a small pocket of awakening in the midst of a dreadfully negative attitude to life, and ... though an impact has been made on the environment, the process is necessarily a slow one.

(Report from the SERVOL project in Trinidad to Bernard van Leer Foundation, 1972)

November 1988

About the authors

Hugh Philp was born in Scotland and trained as a teacher in Australia. He received an M.A. in Psychology from Sydney University, and was awarded a Smith Mundt-Fulbright Fellowship to the Department of Social Relations at Harvard University where he received a Ph.D. on the subject of prejudice towards Australian Aboriginal people. Upon his return to Australia, he taught Education at Sydney University for five years before working for UNESCO first in Thailand and then in Paris. Following the establishment of Macquarie University, he returned to Australia to take up the Foundation Chair of Education, a position he held for 17 years. In 1974 he was elected to the Executive Board of UNESCO and in 1976 became a Vice Chairman. For the Foundation, as well as being at one time a project director, he became a Resident Scientific Adviser in 1978 and subsequently became the Foundation's consultant for Australasia.

Andrew Chetley was born and educated in Canada and trained as a journalist. He worked on daily and weekly publications before moving to England in 1972 where he worked as a campaign officer with the British development agency, War on Want. In 1984 he became a freelance researcher and writer, specialising in health, development, environmental and educational issues and has written extensively on these subjects for a wide range of international and non-governmental organisations as well as for specialised and popular media. He is currently employed as the Foundation's Editorial Associate.

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AFEC	Aboriginal Family Education Centres, Australia
ATCI	Aboriginal Training and Cultural Institute, Australia
BvLF	Bernard van Leer Foundation
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre, Malaysia
CEP	Compensatory Education Project, Malaysia
CIE	Centro de Investigaciones Educativas, Argentina
CINDE	International Centre for Education and Human Development, Colombia
ECCE	early childhood care and education
ECE	early childhood education
ELC	Early Learning Centre at Athlone, South Africa
ELRU	Early Learning Resource Unit, South Africa
ERIC	Educational Resources Information Center
FDP	Family Development Programme, Malaysia
FGM	Fundacion General Mediterránea, Spain
FOCAL	Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama, USA
IPA	Innovation Project Amsterdam, The Netherlands
n.a.	not available
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PLCE	Project for Early Childhood Education, Jamaica
RITP	Research Institute for Applied Psychology at the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands
SERVOL	Service Volunteered for All, Trinidad and Tobago
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USA	United States of America

So many people have helped in the writing of this book that it is difficult to know where to begin.

However, clearly the precedence must go, by right as well as by preference, to Willem Welling, Executive Director of the Bernard van Leer Foundation. Apart from his having been the *fons et origo* of the entire enterprise, his unfailing encouragement, support and, above all, patience have been beyond any reasonable expectation. I must also pay tribute to his admirable objectivity and impartiality. I am sure there are several statements or judgments in the volume with which he disagrees, but he has never attempted to sway my opinions or alter my deductions, other than to point out errors of fact. He has been generous of his permission to read and quote from confidential documents and has trusted in my using them with integrity. And this I have deeply appreciated.

I am also greatly in the debt of other members of the Foundation's staff with whom there have been many long and fruitful discussions about interpretations of policy and the outcomes of projects. I recall with particular gratitude the unfailing professional skills of Jan Keuken and Bert van Blokland on whom I made many bibliographical demands without ever having been disappointed.

In the field, perhaps the greatest personal gain for me in this task has been the friendship of the many splendid men and women whom I have been privileged to meet and talk with during the writing of this book.

More domestically, my thanks are due to Edith Lassak who typed much of the early manuscript with her customary diligence and good-humoured forbearance with my execrable handwriting, and to my daughters Susan and Judy who helped greatly with bibliographies and typing.

Writers and their editors are the subject of many anecdotes, many of them unflattering to both. I have only the highest of

praise for Andrew Chetley whose work in this volume has been of the very best quality and it has been a pleasure to be associated with him.

It is customary for an author to thank his wife for her help. In the present case, only those who know Anne will realise the extent to which this is true: without her there would have been no book at all and it is my great joy and pride to be able to say so publicly.

Hugh Philp
Sydney, 1988

This book is not a history of the Foundation. Histories tend to relate to things past. We have here, due to the dedicated work of Prof. Hugh Philp over the last few years, an attempt to examine the evolution of a living organism, how it has developed to where it is now, with pointers to the future. Hugh Philp has accomplished an immense and complex task. Inevitably what he has produced is a sampling of key moments in the Foundation's growth, in terms of the emerging philosophy of the institution and the work it supports. What is provided is not merely the story of the institution's growth. It is much more a powerfully illustrated case study contributing to the 'development' debate. That is how the last 20 years of the Bernard van Leer Foundation should be seen.

It is characteristic of the Foundation that philosophy and operations are inextricably linked. The book shows clearly the changes in focus that have occurred over the years, stimulated to a very great extent from the experience of the many men, women and children who are involved in the projects in the field. The consistency of objective and the flexibility of approach in achieving that objective – the improvement of life chances for disadvantaged children – holds relevance for the operation of any international organisation. Through both its successes and its occasional failures, the Foundation has learned how to adapt to changing circumstances, and to respond more effectively to people's needs.

At the same time, responding to needs has been tempered by certain overriding philosophical positions: that the professional is not all-knowing; that the consumers of education, children and parents, should play a distinct role in shaping its content; that content, especially in the early years, has to reflect as closely as possible the child's symbolic world so that the child grows confidently in that world sure of who she or he is; that people have to be trusted to make their decisions about their children, with some facilitative help

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should they need it. For these reasons, the work of the Foundation is always entrusted to those people and communities directly concerned with the problems of their children. The Foundation enables and empowers. It does not impose the ways of others.

Ultimately, the story of the Foundation's development is a story of human development. Within the pages of this book there can be found the flavour of the innovative work of dozens of pioneers in early childhood care and education. It is to pay tribute to their efforts to improve opportunities for disadvantaged children and their families, rather than to praise the Foundation, that this book has been produced.

The some 20 years which form the time span with which this book is concerned have been formative years for the work of the Foundation. Through all of that period, it has been my privilege to be the Foundation's Executive Director. The descriptions of some of the projects and events in the Foundation's life have a special poignancy as I recall the efforts that were made by so many to ensure that children could have the means to avoid or lessen the effects of social and cultural disadvantage. While it is impossible to predict what the next 20 years may hold, I can confidently state that the Foundation, its staff, and the hundreds of people associated with it through the Network of projects will continue those efforts, and continue to be flexible and innovative in finding solutions to the problems facing the world's disadvantaged children.

Willem H. Welling
The Hague, 1988

ORIGINS OF THE FOUNDATION

The story of Bernard van Leer and his enterprise, his entrepreneurial spirit, organisational ability and flair for sales and publicity, is part of Holland's industrial history. Less well known is his humanitarian record, including his decision in 1949 to establish a philanthropic institution that was ultimately to become the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF).

Born in 1883, Bernard van Leer left school after completing only his primary education. From his first employment in a hardware store in Amsterdam, he went on to work for a major Rotterdam-based steel, machinery and building materials company, and soon became manager of its Amsterdam branch. In 1919, he established his own company, Van Leer's United Factories, to process and trade in all types of metal, wood, paper, cardboard, cork, glass, twine and cane. This was the start of the now considerable enterprise which specialises in all types of packaging materials, the Van Leer Group of Companies, which at the end of 1987 employed some 14,000 people and was established in 30 countries around the world.

Throughout his working career, Bernard van Leer generously supported many institutions and in 1949, in consultation with his wife Polly and two sons Willem and Oscar, decided to bequeath his entire proprietary interests in the Company to a humanitarian institution which he established in the Canton of Lucerne, in Switzerland, where he had taken up residence. Upon his death in 1958, the entire share capital of the Van Leer Group of Companies passed to this institution which had broad humanitarian objectives. Thus, the profits made by the packaging concerns were available to fund a wide variety of activities to improve conditions and opportunities for people who were in some way disadvantaged.

A FOCUS ON EDUCATION

Although initially registered in Switzerland, the Bernard van Leer Foundation set up an executive office in The Hague in The Netherlands, and slowly through the first years of its

existence, under the guidance of Bernard van Leer's son, Oscar, began to develop a focus for the work which it would support. By 1965, the Foundation had decided to concentrate on the learning problems of socially or economically disadvantaged children and youth, particularly those living in countries where the Van Leer Group was established, in order to help them achieve the realisation of their intellectual potential. This decision meant, to a large extent, that efforts would be made to re-invest the income generated by the Van Leer Group in the countries where it had been generated, and to invest in those countries' most valuable resource – its youth. The means of this investment was to be through educational projects that would provide better opportunities for young people to play an active part in their country's future.

At the beginning of the 1970s it was decided to register the Foundation in The Netherlands and, from January 1972, The Hague has been its headquarters. (A small foundation remained in Lucerne, to support local philanthropic endeavours in that Canton.)

By the late 1980s, the Foundation was supporting some 150 projects in 41 countries, the vast majority of which focus on early childhood care and education (ECCE). In addition to financial support, the Foundation also provides professional guidance to governmental, academic and voluntary bodies operating projects to enable disadvantaged children to benefit fully from educational and social development opportunities, and provides support for the interchange of ideas and experience in this field through seminars, workshops, publications and audio-visual materials.

Tracing the Foundation's growth

Between 1958 and 1965 almost all grants made by the Bernard van Leer Foundation were to private or semi-private institutions, mainly concerned with the handicapped. Although worthwhile in the great charitable, philanthropic tradition, the Trustees, and in particular the Chairman, Oscar van Leer, were not satisfied: it was the huge mass of socially and economically disadvantaged children whom they wished to help to realise their human birthright.

During the early years of the 1960s Oscar van Leer became increasingly dedicated to the economically and socially disadvantaged child in the sense in which the American Head Start programmes, the 'Educational Priority Areas' projects

in England and Wales and similar initiatives in other countries had begun to use the term. He made the critical decision to focus the activities of the Foundation on projects for children and youth 'impeded by the social and cultural inadequacy of their background'. By the use of education, broadly defined, as a strategy such children and youth would be enabled to 'achieve the greatest possible realisation of their innate, intellectual potential'. In line with the main stream of theoretical thought at the time, the statement stresses the intellectual development of the child and, by inference, the role of the formal educational establishment.

This statement of intent was embodied in the Statutes of the Foundation (BvLF, Policy, 1966) and, together with supporting material, was distributed to relevant authorities in the countries in which van Leer companies were operating. With this, the Bernard van Leer Foundation may fairly be said to have begun its operations.

By the end of the 1960s the Foundation underwent a major change. From being a purely grant-giving institution, it became actively involved in field projects. From being concerned with a comparatively substantial number of small projects, its funds became increasingly diverted to a small number of relatively large-scale projects, the majority of them using early childhood education as a strategy for alleviating or preventing disadvantage.

Over the years, as Table 1 shows, both the amounts of grants and the numbers of projects funded have increased[1]. Similarly, the focus for many of those projects has steadily increased towards early childhood education (ECE) in the early years, and more recently towards early childhood care and education (ECCE)[2].

[1] The amounts are presented in terms of 'adjusted guilders' – that is Dutch guilders converted for each year to their value in the base year of 1965.

[2] These shifts in emphasis and in methodology may be described as a movement from concern with the education of the child, in a narrow sense, to concentration on the total development of the child as the primary objective of child rearing. In some contexts within the work of the Foundation, this focus is called 'care' and this usage has been adopted as a matter of convenient shorthand in this work. There is in such terminology an obvious danger, in that in many countries 'child

Questions to be faced

Having decided the initial broad policy, the Foundation was immediately faced with a series of pragmatic questions over its implementation. What determined whether a child was disadvantaged? Where were these children to be found – in which countries and which areas of the country? How could their disadvantage be best prevented or ameliorated – by working through schools, parents, the community, or some combination of these? And which were the best bodies to administer projects – universities, national or local governments, the communities themselves, or voluntary organisations?

Table 1: Grants and No. of Projects by Period (in 000s of adjusted guilders)

PERIOD	TOTAL GRANTS (A)	GRANTS TO ECE/ ECCE (B)	B AS % OF A	NO. OF ECE/ECCE PROJECTS	AV. GRANT TO ECE/ECCE PROJECTS
1965-68	6779.8	3889.1	57.4	17	228.8
1969-72	18070.3	11324.7	62.7	34	333.1
1973-76	15744.9	11458.9	72.8	39	292.8
1977-80	29694.9	22693.5	76.4	75	302.6
1981-82	6772.7	4764.2	70.3	22	216.5
1983-86	29193.6	27767.1	95.1	105	264.4
1965-86	106256.2	81897.2	77.1	292	280.5

Like all such questions, there were few simple answers. Indeed, the answers have, in a sense, evolved during the Foundation's existence. As will be seen, no single answer has been found. Rather, the Foundation has operated a flexible approach. It has adapted to a broad range of settings, target groups and project partners; yet, it has managed to incorporate this diversity within the parameters of its overall

care' means no more than 'child minding' by available adults or adolescents who are all too often untrained and unqualified. It cannot be too strongly stated that for the Foundation 'care' means solicitude for the total welfare of the child by provision of services 'likely to increase the probability of optimum development'.

objective as defined in the original Statutes (which themselves have been modified and have become more focused over time) and has maintained a consistency in its approach.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Although the Foundation has accepted the priority of early childhood as much on pragmatic as on theoretical grounds, the rationale for a focus on young children was outlined by Benjamin Bloom (1964) in another context, and was put more succinctly by Passow (1970), 'the early environment is of crucial importance in laying the basis for human development'.

Both writers imply the possibility of reversing at least some of the effects of disadvantage and also assert that the probability of change decreases with increasing age: hence the importance of ECCE programmes as a means of attaining the Foundation's fundamental objective. It would have been perfectly proper (and still would be for that matter) for BvLF to support health, agricultural or economic projects, provided it could be shown (as is not difficult) that they can be directly related to maximising innate human potential. Increasingly, as more projects have been supported in the developing world, they have been concerned in part with health and nutrition, but the basic strategy has remained educational.

A unique foundation

The philosophy behind the decision to focus on projects 'preferably, if not exclusively, in countries where a van Leer Company is established' is patently in line with a humanist, philanthropic vision: profits from industrial operations should be distributed for the good of the people in the places in which the money is made. This vision is shared by many, but sadly enough has not always been realised. A Foundation policy document, prepared in 1980, succinctly describes the unique position the Foundation holds (BvLF, Policy, 1980):

> The Foundation is one of two private foundations in the world owning the entire stock of an industrial enterprise, the other being the Wellcome Trust[1]; the Foundation is spending more than any other similar institution on activities outside its country of locus; the concept of

[1] Although correct at the time, Wellcome, a UK-based pharmaceutical enterprise, has subsequently been floated on the London Stock Exchange and the Trust no longer owns the entire stock.

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reinvesting industrial profits in the countries where they are generated for educational purposes is not applied elsewhere; no other institution has the Foundation's programme commitment and operational dimension in regard to its direct involvement in project design, resource development, training, assessment and dissemination; no other Foundation has both an international governing board and staff; and no other organisation is known to have the interlinking and interacting elements as provided by the van Leer establishment.

The decision to work preferably in 'Company countries' raises a problem of a different kind. Since the Van Leer Group is essentially concerned with industrial matters, the majority of the companies tend to be located in affluent countries or in the rapidly industrialising countries of the developing world[1]. It means that the very poor states are for the most part excluded.

Such an emphasis obviously implies a relativist approach. This has been accepted by the Trustees and emphasised in many projects. The Foundation has tended to look at groups of children and youth in any one culture or society in comparison with other groups within the same society. There is no absolutism. Clearly, this is to accept the ideas formulated long ago by S.A. Stouffer (1949) about relative deprivation. In this sense a target group for BvLF is one whose members are less likely to attain or achieve their potential than the majority within the same society. Such groups are difficult to define precisely, except in terms of any given society: the definition becomes operational.

Inevitably such a relativist position can lead to charges of inconsistency or even inequity if comparisons are made across or between countries rather than within them. To this the pragmatic answer may be given that within any one society it is the relative position which becomes important for

[1] In 1988 the countries in which the Van Leer Group of Companies was established were: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Trinidad & Tobago, United Kingdom, United States of America, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

any foundation because of limited resources and because all concomitants of disadvantage must be opposed wherever they are found. The children in all Foundation-supported projects are demonstrably disadvantaged and it is with this fact that the Foundation has been concerned.

Basic philosophy

In broad terms, the Foundation, in its activities:

is focused on the disadvantaged child, rather than being concerned with all children;

is devoted to improvement in the quality of education, in the widest sense, rather than with measures to increase the numbers of children entering education systems;

is committed to education, again in the broad sense, as the most effective basic strategy for preventing or alleviating the effects of disadvantage;

is environmentalist, or at least interactionist in its view of child development rather than accepting genetic approaches;

is eclectic in both theory and practice in relation to the projects it supports and the methods and techniques employed within those projects. That is, there is no single educational theory or modality on which the Foundation insists or even one which it strongly advocates;

is relativist rather than absolutist in its acceptance of the meaning of disadvantage from country to country and project to project;

believes in the endogenous development of projects rather than prescription or imposition; and finally,

is geographically restricted between countries, but not within them.

The Foundation through the years

The evidence for such statements will be presented in the subsequent chapters. It is generally convenient to look at the history of the Foundation in four-year periods, beginning from 1965 when the decision was made to focus on attempts to combat the social and economic disadvantage experienced by children and youth. The exception to this approach occurs at the beginning of the 1980s when major policy discussions

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were underway within the Foundation that were to shape the course of the Foundation's more recent activities. Accordingly, the period 1981-1982 is considered as a 'pause for reflection', both in terms of embarking on new initiatives, and in terms of the number of projects supported.

Chapters two through seven trace the development of the Foundation in each of the respective time periods by examining a small selection of the nearly 300 projects supported between 1965 and 1986 as being illustrative of the general trends which occurred. At the same time, reference is made to some of the theoretical discussions that were prevalent in the field of early childhood education in each period. Mention is also made of some of the other activities encouraged by the Foundation, such as seminars, workshops and a publications programme, which have contributed to the overall body of knowledge in this field.

Chapter two, which covers the period from 1965-1968, helps to explain the initial efforts of the Foundation in supporting projects in ECE. Brief descriptions of four such projects help to illustrate some aspects of the theory of compensation which was prevalent at the time as well as the practical means by which that theory was applied and some of the lessons that were learned in its application.

The third chapter traces developments during the years 1969-1972. On the basis of its own field experience and as a result of some analysis of other ECE programmes, the Foundation began to support projects which, although still centred on pre-school facilities, had started to recognise the importance of involving parents and communities in their activities. This period also saw the start of support activities and services by the Foundation in order to facilitate the development of innovative programmes and to ensure wide dissemination of information about them.

Chapter four follows this trend through 1973-1976, a period when the Foundation appeared to be consolidating its efforts and testing the strength of its approach to deal with social and economic disadvantage. Yet at the same time, it was possible to discern the beginnings of new directions which would form the basis of work during the 1980s.

Chapter five examines the tremendous growth which occurred conceptually and in terms of numbers of projects

and the total funds granted during 1977-1980. By the end of this period, more and more projects were focused on the 'whole child' rather than simply on the child as a pupil. As a result, the concept of early childhood care was becoming increasingly important and was being integrated into project activities.

The sixth chapter deals with the 'pause for reflection' years of 1981 and 1982, although pause is perhaps an inappropriate term. It was a time of intense activity within the Foundation as the experience of some 15 years was analysed and distilled into a coherent policy for the 1980s.

The seventh chapter looks at the way in which that policy has begun to be implemented during the years 1983-1986.

The concluding chapter serves to summarise several of the arguments raised and touches briefly on the efforts that have been taken in 1987 and 1988 to further expand the work of the Foundation and the initial discussions that will set its direction into the next decade.

2. BEGINNINGS (1965-1968)

THE COMPENSATORY MODEL

Having decided to focus on children and youth disadvantaged by their social or cultural backgrounds, and having identified education as the primary means by which to prevent or ameliorate that disadvantage, the Foundation began looking for models which could be applied. The original model was that of compensatory education, derived essentially from the American Head Start programmes. The basic assumption in the Head Start model was that by improving the educational skills of teachers and by careful curriculum design, significant positive changes could be expected in the quality of children's learning. This in turn would help to overcome disadvantage and so help each child to maximise his or her potential. Good educational programmes in the pre-school years were seen as being able to compensate for disadvantage in social or cultural backgrounds.

This was not a particularly new idea: appropriate education programmes as a weapon against poverty were, to a large extent, re-inventions of the wheel. Pestalozzi (1781) and Froebel (1889), for example, had advocated and practised such a philosophy more than a century before Head Start. Indeed a case could be made that the European pre-school/kindergarten movement in its early years was essentially concerned with the contribution of early education to the eradication or alleviation of want.

In fact there was, as Zigler and Valentine (1979, p.24) point out, nothing strictly innovative even in Head Start in the USA where, in the latter half of the nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth century, 'philanthropists and reformers developed a series of programmes designed to offer early training and aid to poor children'.

Between 1965 and 1968 the Foundation supported 17 ECE projects. As Table 2 shows, the majority were located in industrialised countries, most concentrated on the pre-school as a target and the institutions which received funding tended to be either universities or voluntary organisations.

THE JAMAICA PROJECT

The first major ECE project supported by the Foundation was in Jamaica, when in 1966, funds were made available to the University of the West Indies for a project centred around the Jamaican 'Basic Schools' – the Project for Early Childhood Education (PECE).

The Basic Schools were sponsored by churches, civic organisations, community groups and even individuals. Approximately 80,000 children out of an estimated pre-school population of 180,000 children attended these schools. If the schools reached a certain size, they could qualify for a government grant of between J$50-100 per year. Over 400 of them were then receiving such grants. Teachers' salaries were very low, on average about J$12 a month. Assistants averaged from J$8-10 a month. The highest paid Head Teacher in Jamaica received J$20 a month, was in charge of a school of 200 children and taught a class of 80 herself (this class size was probably below average). The 'teachers' in these schools were either very young girls or elderly women. Few had passed the Jamaica local examination Grade 2 and may not have passed Grade 1 – equivalent to a Primary School Certificate. They were described as 'the most seriously disadvantaged schools, staffed by the most disadvantaged teachers serving the most disadvantaged children' (BvLF, Proposal, 1965).

At this stage, the argument, based as it was on Head Start, was couched almost exclusively in educational terms and letters and reports to and from the project did not refer to the other ways in which these children may be disadvantaged. It would have been relatively easy to show that in terms of health, living conditions and housing, the children were very disadvantaged indeed. This point was clearly made in a Foundation *Newsletter* in 1971:

> The majority of children attending Basic Schools ... came in general from poor, illiterate families, lived in cramped conditions, often lacked a father figure, and grew up in an atmosphere where children who showed any originality were seen as a nuisance. By the time these children reached primary school the damage was done: they were consistently inferior, compared to their middle class counterparts, whose development had been fostered by articulate and concerned parents and frequently by private and nursery schools. Clearly, the gulf between social classes, a particularly serious problem for an

Table 2: Grants and No. of ECE/ECCE Projects by Region, by Location Within Country, by Target Group, and by Type of Institution – 1965-1968 (in 000s of adjusted guilders to 1965 base)

	ECE GRANTS IN ADJUSTED GUILDERS (000s)	AVERAGE VALUE OF GRANT	GRANTS AS % OF TOTAL ECE GRANTS	NUMBER OF ECE PROJECTS
TOTALS FOR THE PERIOD	3889.1	228.8	100	17
REGIONS				
Latin America	–	–	–	–
Caribbean	1448.0	1448.0	37.2	1
Asia & Oceania (incl. Australia)	1003.2	143.3	25.8	7
Africa	–	–	–	–
Europe & Others (incl. USA & Israel)	1435.3	159.5	36.9	9
International (more than 1 country)	2.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
LOCATION WITHIN COUNTRY				
Urban	1260.1	157.5	32.4	8
Rural	518.4	103.7	13.3	5
Mixed	2110.7	527.6	54.3	4
TARGET GROUPS				
Pre-schools	3055.5	278.8	78.6	11
Pre-school + parents	452.9	226.4	11.6	2
Pre-school + parents + community	380.7	95.2	9.8	4
Community	–	–	–	–
TYPE OF INSTITUTION				
Universities	2520.1	315.0	64.8	8
Governments	267.8	267.8	6.9	1
Voluntary organisations	1101.2	137.7	28.3	8

underdeveloped country in need of the skilled resources of the entire population, was growing wider all the time under the existing educational system.

Even this statement was largely in educational terms and the solution to the problem was seen similarly. The target groups

were essentially children within the schools, rather than children as such. In 1965, given the basic premise, and the USA and UK climate of professional opinion, compensatory education in an institutional setting was a valid assumption.

Although the Basic Schools were not part of the official education network, the Jamaican Ministry of Education was kept fully informed of the activities and the proposals. Unofficially, the University was given every encouragement and the Minister for Education went out of his way to assure both the Foundation and the Vice Chancellor of the University of his active interest at all stages. When the time came to apply for funding for a second phase, the Department of Education was able to offer its formal support as well as its blessing. In fact the Basic Schools and their work have had considerable influence on the development of early childhood education and indeed on primary education in Jamaica as the University, the Ministry and the Foundation have come to work together in a harmonious partnership.

Teacher training

Tactics were straightforward. They involved a carefully thought-out design for the in-service education and training of the teachers in the Basic Schools; the identification, training and employment of a set of teachers' aides or para-professionals; a new curriculum within the capacity of the teachers; and production of textbooks and other materials.

The in-service and para-professional programmes were highly innovative in the Jamaican context. It was an act of notable courage to take women with very little formal education and no training whatsoever and attempt, with a great deal of success, to provide them with somewhat greater general education, knowledge and background and a set of good quality classroom survival skills. The technique depended heavily on a small group of dedicated supervisors and teacher trainers. The latter, it must be emphasised, were not themselves particularly well educated nor trained, in that they had completed no more than a minimum level of secondary education plus teacher training of the 'normal school' variety, and were required to have had some years of teaching experience in the island's primary schools. Their main attributes were enthusiasm, willingness to learn and above all identification with schools, the children and the people they were striving to train. The core of the programme was short-term courses, highly skill-oriented, and relentless follow-up. The supervisors, somewhat better qualified,

devoted most of their time to the curriculum and material development and to running courses and workshops for the teacher trainers and the teachers.

Using para-professionals

In an act of both courage and foresight, the project director, Reg Murray, and his successor, the late Dudley Grant, decided to back up this teaching force with a group of totally untrained and, in almost all cases, ill-educated women to act as aides in the schools. The role of the teacher's aide or para-professional in the classroom has been a matter of considerable, frequently bitter, debate in educational circles in Western systems. In particular, trained, educated, experienced teachers have all too often resented and rejected their employment as likely to lead to dilution and to a reduction in the employment levels of fully qualified professionals. The PECE group argued that, given the large class sizes in the Basic Schools, it was unrealistic and unreasonable to expect semi-trained, not particularly well-educated teachers to maintain control, let alone teach effectively, without assistance.

The Foundation input, both intellectual and in terms of material resources, was considerable. Apart from advisory visits of headquarters' personnel, the granting of funds for missions for the staff of PECE to innovative programmes in the USA and the UK, and similar activities, the Foundation was able to assist by providing advice on curriculum, including sample materials in the form of kits, to be used within the Basic Schools.

It was easy to demonstrate that the new curriculum in the Basic Schools, backed by appropriate methods and an intensive programme of teacher re-education, did result in more effective learning and in higher levels of school attendance. The children entering the elementary system from the new Basic Schools were better prepared than their predecessors or those enrolling from other sources. In effect, these children were, comparatively speaking, so well prepared as to cast doubt on the effectiveness of the existing schools. It became embarrassingly obvious that there was an urgent need to improve the primary schools to meet the new challenge. A decision was made that the most effective way of accomplishing this was to extend and adapt the methods which had proved so successful in the Basic Schools. The motive was supplied by the pressure from below and not, as in the USA, the UK and elsewhere, by argument about

follow-through and reinforcement. Many of the new elementary school programmes in industrialised societies were, to a large extent, a response to the so-called failure of Head Start and similar projects to produce gains which were sustained in the elementary school. In Jamaica, as in other developing countries, it was rather a response to success.

Whether this development was a major success or not is another question. An advisory mission, which visited Jamaica at the request of the government in 1984 to evaluate early childhood education, was doubtful (BvLF, Project Report, 1984), but it would seem that the most important lesson of PECE was largely ignored – 'begin where the schools, teachers and children really are and not where the system would like them to be.'

It may be argued that the Jamaican project helped to upgrade uneducated and untrained teachers to being at least partially trained and move the curriculum from the unorganised and totally unstructured to the highly organised and rigidly prescribed, in something under six years. The objectives, and some of the programmes, tried to get beyond this with varying success, but in practice it is hard to escape the conclusion that there is a certain inevitability about the development of educational systems. The process may be accelerated in various ways and equality may be improved level by level but nonetheless each system passes inexorably through each stage, and compensation is an irrelevant, Western idea. Indeed it is much to the credit of PECE and its constituent parts that it was able to raise the level of the system so successfully and rapidly.

Lessons learned

What did the Foundation learn from PECE? It was the first real attempt to move from charity to support and implementation, in the best sense. More important it represented a conscious policy decision to use education as the fundamental strategy for overcoming or preventing the consequences of disadvantage. PECE in Jamaica was the testing ground for BvLF. On a wider scale, PECE was the first major attempt to introduce early childhood education to a developing country.

The greatest single lesson learned by the Foundation from the Jamaican project was that the new policy was thoroughly justified, in practice as in theory. On a more specific level, probably the most significant contribution to Foundation

thinking was the highly successful use of para-professionals. Dudley Grant (1981, p.10), wrote:

> In response to the challenge and the need, the Project for Early Childhood Education proceeded ... to test its hypothesis that the para-professionals in the pre-primary schools (Basic Schools) can be trained to be competent teachers of three-to-six-year-olds. With quality as the prime goal of the emerging strategy, the programme was characterised by utilisation of adequate practicum, a relevant classroom-based course content, instructional supervision, on-the-job training on a continuous basis, and interaction of home, community and school.

The pattern has been repeated with local variations over and over again in Foundation-supported projects in many countries.

Minority sub-cultures

In many ways the whole concept of compensation has been related to the problems of the disadvantaged minorities in relatively affluent societies. If the education system has been designed to meet the needs of the majority, then children from a minority (whether the minority is described in terms of poverty, language or cultural difference) are at a disadvantage in that the probability of their profiting from the educational system will be relatively low. In this formulation, compensation becomes a technique for providing such children with the skills, knowledge and attitudes expected by the system of all entrants to the schools. Thus, although compensation may not always, or even frequently, be relevant in advanced systems, a case may occasionally be made for such a model. For the moment it is pertinent to look at an example of a disadvantaged minority in a developed Western society.

THE RUTLAND STREET PROJECT IN IRELAND

In Dublin, the capital of Ireland, the project area was close to its centre where elegant Georgian buildings housed the city's professional and business elite up to the end of the last century. In the early 1900s, as wealthier people moved to new suburbs, the changing social patterns resulted in purchase of the buildings by the Public Housing Authority and their conversion into tenements to meet a pressing housing need among Dublin's poor. Population growth and movement in the 1930s resulted in the building in the same area of a number of four-storey blocks of flats. After nearly 50 years of neglect, both tenements and flats had degenerated into

decaying slums. The area was greatly overcrowded with a large working class population. The majority of the men worked in local factories and business firms, on construction sites and in nearby dockland. Such employment was predominantly of an unskilled casual or seasonal nature with its related incidence of periodic and often prolonged unemployment. A small proportion of the women – about 20 per cent – worked outside the home to supplement the family income and many people received assistance from statutory and voluntary organisations (BvLF Newsletter, No.5, 1972; No.8, 1973).

The Rutland Street project stemmed from an existing viable structure. The concerned departments of the Irish Government and community representatives of medicine, social sciences and education set up a working party to consider ways and means of providing a programme of compensatory education as its principal strategy for dealing with the problems. Following the group's discussions, a formal Committee, representative of the various authorities, was established; a project director was appointed, a basic plan of operations was prepared and the Foundation was approached only when the administrative character and lines of control and communication had been clearly established. The Committee remained in being as the organisation responsible for management of the project.

The target group was a clearly identifiable minority in terms of poverty and living conditions, if not of language nor, in serious terms, of literacy. Nonetheless it was relatively easy to demonstrate that the children were being impeded from attaining their innate potential. The director of the project wrote (Kellaghan, 1975):

> schools in Ireland as in other developed countries, are failing to take account of the attitudes, skills and learning styles of children whose cultural background differs significantly from that of the dominant middle class. The result is that school is seen by many children as irrelevant, hostile, something which fails to stimulate them and from which they wish to escape at the first opportunity.

Developing potential

In the project's early stages, its objectives were cast in direct compensatory terms (BvLF, Letter, 1968):

> to provide an educational environment which would attempt to develop fully the intellectual, physical, emotional and social potential of each child not only in the pre-school centre but also to involve the parents in the work with the aid of social workers. A special curriculum is to be developed for these disadvantaged children, as other nursery education provision (exclusively private) in Ireland is mainly for middle class children.

The techniques, at the beginning at least, were school-centred. However, the methodologies and techniques were quite different from those in Jamaica. In Ireland, the teachers were reasonably well-educated and trained. However, there was little in the classroom to cater for the emotional and creative life of the children.

Given the compensatory philosophy, the problem resolved itself inevitably into developing a new enriched curriculum and helping teachers to learn to use it effectively. A significant feature of the Rutland Street plan was the deliberate and explicit acceptance of a specific theory of child development and a conscious innovative effort to build an appropriate curriculum based both on it and on the particular needs of the children in the area (Kellaghan, 1977):

> The development of the curriculum was strongly influenced by Piagetian principles of development. Piaget has described strategies used by the child to bring order, meaning and control to his [or her] environment and 'his theory is the only comprehensive one in existence which analyses a four-year-old's knowledge in terms of his [or her] past and his [or her] future' (Kamii, 1971). It allows for many of the activities of the traditional pre-school but adds depth and a developmental perspective to them. Furthermore, it emphasises abilities and skills related to performance at school. Kamii (1971) has indicated how later school work may depend on development of abilities outlined by Piaget.

Apart from the contradiction implicit in describing a curriculum as both compensatory and developmental, it is arguable that this may well have been the first major attempt outside the USA to base an entire curriculum for a relatively

large number of children on Piaget's work. Kellaghan pays generous tribute to the American scholars on whom the project drew for its initial development citing Kamii (1971a), Kamii and Radin (1970), Sonquist, Kamii and Dermin (1968), Weikart, Rogers, Adcock and McClelland (1971).

The Foundation actively encouraged the theoretical approach and its practical development. Great interest was shown in particular in the way in which the curriculum reflected the specific nature of the community. Indeed it could be contended that Rutland Street represented a development of Piaget's ideas which purists might not find acceptable, although Piaget might well have welcomed it. In particular, the steady growth of emphasis on social and personality development and language represented an advance on the Piagetian model not reflected in the general literature until much later.[1]

Compensation and development

In practice the Rutland Street curriculum and methods oscillated between compensation and development. Piagetian data about cognitive levels were used in order to ensure the relevance of particular knowledge and skills. The view was taken that, because of their background, many of the children did not possess the knowledge and the skills normally associated with their assessed stage of development.

The Rutland Street project was the first objective demonstration of the basic cognitively developmental and environmentalist approach adopted by the Foundation in its Statutes. PECE was larger in scale and more pragmatic, less deliberately based on specific theory.

In Rutland Street, the developmental/environmentalist emphasis developed steadily. Parental involvement, it is true, was mildly foreshadowed in the early discussions but not seriously implemented in the first stages other than by keeping families informed and inviting them to visit the centre. The position changed steadily throughout the history of the project. To quote Kellaghan (1975) again:

[1] For a detailed discussion of this issue see Kelly, Philp and Lewis, 1982.

> While the pre-school centre was the focal point of the project the active involvement of parents was seen as being necessary for the success of the project. Before the project began, feelings of indifference and hostility towards school were prevalent among parents. Unless such negative attitudes could be changed, any benefit the children might derive from their experience of the pre-school centre would be likely to be short-lived. So an important objective of the project was to involve parents and particularly the mothers as closely as possible with the school.

Nonetheless as this statement demonstrates, the focus was still on the school. Involvement of parents was essentially seen as a method for reinforcing and supporting what the school had to offer. Compensation of the child for the deficiencies in his or her background was still seen as a relevant strategy. However, the evaluation of the project outcomes pointed clearly and distinctly to the importance of the family. 'Home involvement is a critical component of a successful programme' (Kellaghan, 1975, p.303).

Home visiting

The change in philosophy which began in the first phase developed very rapidly in the years after 1970, so that Kellaghan (1977), who had stated earlier that the focus of the programme was in the school, wrote in his final report on the evaluation of the project:

> In view of the strong relationships between home backgrounds of children and their scholastic attainments, the work of the school, it would seem, is likely to be severely limited by the amount of support and cooperation it receives from the home. ... [As] poverties have their origins in both situational and cultural characteristics of those minorities which suffer disadvantage and discrimination, remedies will have to be sought in the broad context of both economic and cultural (including educational) reform.

This philosophy reflected the operations of the second phase in Rutland Street, during which was introduced an innovative practice – home visiting or home intervention – which was also to affect Foundation thinking in later years. Holland (1979) says that the objectives of the programme were to encourage the mother to spend more time with her child, playing, teaching, reading or simply talking, and to

demonstrate to mothers ways of drawing their children's attention to aspects of the environment.

This was developmental theory, rather than compensation. Holland suggests that: 'the measured effects of home intervention programmes in Ireland on the mothers and children taking part in them do not appear to have been very significant', possibly because the measuring instruments used were not sensitive enough to detect significant differences. Archer and Kellaghan (BvLF, Project Report, 1976b) agreed with this interpretation and argued strongly for a home intervention component in any future ECE programmes for disadvantaged children.

AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES

The theoretical literature of the time was already beginning to suggest that the emphasis on compensation and on the child at school, did not go far enough, that the focus should be on the community and the child as part of the community and that educational strategies should therefore be directed at the community as a whole. This was certainly the view of Lex Grey, project coordinator of the Aboriginal Family Education Centres (AFEC) in New South Wales, Australia, one of four projects approved in 1968 for young Aboriginal children.

AFEC and the other projects are described in detail by Teasdale and Whitelaw (1981). Three of them followed the general theory and pattern of Head Start, emphasising compensation, with some local variations, and had little effect on either Foundation policy or Australian practice, despite their many good features. AFEC was a different matter, if somewhat ahead of its time.

Grey's view, derived in part from his experience with Maori people in New Zealand, was that early childhood education should be non-directive and concerned essentially with education as a strategy for self-development within the context of the family and the immediate community. In his final report to the Foundation (Grey, 1974) he wrote:

> It was educational from start to finish, this in contra-distinction to being a project conducted by specialists from other disciplines, such as psychology, medicine, biology, psychiatry or religion, in the name of education. Two aspects within the educative process on which the project remained emphatic and saw no cause to modify were the

> central importance of family; and, of families meeting in their community and beyond.

In addition, and again Grey was well ahead of current theory, great weight was placed on what was later to be called 'indigenous materials and learning styles'. He claims (Grey, 1974, p.) that the project helped Aboriginal families to search out 'ways in which, through education, they could try to contribute what is distinctly theirs in Australian society'.

The project in practice

In practice AFEC departed to some extent from this philosophy, which implies the rejection of any outside assistance or models. A number of Maori were brought from New Zealand to work with the project in the field. Grey claims that this was justified by the similarity of the Maori value system to that of Aboriginal people and in their more or less common experience of colonisation. It was felt that the Maori experience and the reasonably successful techniques developed by and with them in New Zealand would have direct relevance in New South Wales. The accuracy of Grey's anthropology and of his colonial history has been questioned, but the success of the methods was undoubted.

Each AFEC, of which there were eventually 12, in theory controlled its own educational destiny, with decisions about curriculum and teaching made by the parents. In practice, as Teasdale and Whitelaw (1981) note:

> Very extensive guidelines were provided for the content of the programmes. This seems to be one of the anomalies of the project, for while Lex Grey claimed to be non-directive he nevertheless provided a very elaborate curriculum that in places seems unduly narrow and restrictive.

There were three strands of the curriculum: gains in self-concept; perceptual development; and speech development. The project designed special observation-discussion materials and made use of sophisticated materials. This too suggests a measure of inconsistency or, rather, a pragmatic interpretation of the fundamental objectives of the project.

Finally, it is worth quoting the basic tenets of AFEC: whether they were always scrupulously observed is, for present purposes, irrelevant. They echo some of the ideas of Freire, Keddie, Labov and others on disadvantage and deprivation and are at the same time assertions of faith which are

prophetic of some later aspects of Foundation policy. They read (Grey, 1974, p.137):

> AFEC complements and supplements family education – it is not a compensatory programme.
>
> AFEC accepts the values and experiences of people – it does not regard people as underprivileged.
>
> AFEC accepts the life style and values of the people – it does not regard people as disadvantaged.
>
> AFEC accepts the universality of education ... it is for all in every society – it does not regard people as deprived.

Notions of this kind began to influence Foundation policy in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Inevitably, given the philosophy of local initiatives, the movement was relatively slow. It began with deliberate, planned efforts to involve parents and was gradually extended to the communities. It was not for some time that projects with philosophies similar to those of AFEC were again supported by the Foundation or, indeed, were presented for support.

THE EMERGENCE OF A FIELD MODEL

By the end of the first period, the Foundation had collaborated with a fairly wide variety of institutions in a number of countries in establishing ECE programmes with a general philosophy of compensation. There had been a number of worthwhile results and some disappointments. The most dramatic in their effects probably had been the efforts in the West Indies which had begun to transform the entire Basic School system, and had spread from Jamaica to Trinidad and Tobago and Dominica. The new projects proposed for these areas were likely to shift the emphasis from purely early childhood education within schools to projects which would involve parents and eventually entire communities.

The projects for disadvantaged children in industrialised countries, such as that of Rutland Street in Ireland, and three of the four for Aboriginal children in Australia, tended to emphasise compensation and to work within the setting of the institutional pre-school. There was some movement towards work with parents, although this was seen essentially as a means of reinforcing the work of the school. By the end of the

period, however, there was some shift towards looking at the parent-child-teacher triad as an interacting complex.

Apart from these projects, AFEC, beginning with a different philosophy, had demonstrated the value and viability of an approach to children based on work with the total community as a community. The Foundation had found it possible, indeed desirable, to facilitate these varying ideas and methods, provided they seemed likely to help fulfil the basic objectives. The flexibility and risk taking with a variety of models which distinguish the Foundation in 1988 were already apparent, as were a number of the specific features which characterise most projects. A field model was emerging.

During the second period, there were important developments in methods both of control and operation of projects. Several fascinating innovative techniques were supported; some were seminal in the evolution of Foundation philosophy and policy.

One of the most important developments, already suggested in the description of the Rutland Street project in the previous chapter, was the recognition of the need to link the school with the wider community. The projects described in this chapter help to illustrate the ways in which that conclusion was reached. Some, such as the projects in The Netherlands and in Trinidad and Tobago illustrate what could be called a positive confirmation of the effectiveness of such an approach, in that the communities themselves were heavily involved in the initial development of what proved to be successful initiatives. A project in South Africa, on the other hand, although in itself successful, confirmed the difficulties of developing relatively high-cost 'demonstration' models in the hope that they would be replicated elsewhere. A project in Kenya echoes, in some respects, the lessons of Rutland Street, in that its initial focus on compensation shifted towards development and greater community involvement.

At the same time, there was rich material emerging in the literature on early childhood education. The *National Society for the Study of Education Yearbook*, edited by Gordon (1972), on early childhood education, appeared during this period and the first major evaluative studies for projects such as Head Start, Sesame Street and the English and Welsh Educational Priority Area programmes were in the bookshops and in the journals. Few of these reports had brought together the research worker, the theoretician, the project director and the practicing classroom teacher. Most had focused on summative evaluation of outcomes, although Bloom's *Formative and Summative Evaluation*, (Bloom, *et al*, 1971), with its brilliant chapters by Cazden and Kamii on evaluation of learning in early childhood, appeared in 1971.

SUPPORT FOR INNOVATION: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOUNDATION NETWORK

The Foundation used the opportunity of its own field experience and the increasing discussion in the literature to initiate a set of activities and services, based on headquarters in The Hague, to facilitate the development of institutional structures and innovative programmes, and to ensure that information about project development was widely disseminated to projects, government authorities, and the general professional public.

The central concept, in line with modern theory, was that of networking. The Foundation Network was seen as based partly on an interlocking set of projects and partly on inter-relationships between the people who operate these activities. The Foundation regards the Network as its principal means of cross-fertilisation and dissemination, to ensure that innovative action which has been developed in one project may be made available to others.

There are two principal techniques: first, encouragement and facilitation of direct face-to-face contact between people either formally or informally through seminars, workshops and visits between projects, and second, preparation and dissemination of publications. Two major international seminars are described later in this chapter.

In the second period the number of projects with an ECE component doubled and the available funds almost trebled. There was no significant shift in target groups, the within-school emphasis was maintained. There was the beginning of a shift towards the developing world, more in terms of proportions of projects and funds than in absolute numbers or amounts. Within countries, the tendency for an emphasis on urban areas began to become apparent. Universities remained the dominant institutional group, as Table 3 shows.

INNOVATION IN AMSTERDAM

The Innovation Project Amsterdam (IPA) is in many ways an almost ideal example of the developments in Foundation thinking and practice in this second period. The project had its origin in earlier experimental studies in the eastern Netherlands, where a number of research programmes initiated by the University of Amsterdam had looked at problems of failure in the primary school. Out of this experience, the staff of the Research Institute for Applied Psychology at the University of Amsterdam, (RITP)

Table 3: Grants and No. of ECE/ECCE Projects by Region, by Location Within Country, by Target Group, and by Type of Institution – 1969-1972 (in 000s of adjusted guilders to 1965 base)

	ECE GRANTS IN ADJUSTED GUILDERS (000s)	AVERAGE VALUE OF GRANT	GRANTS AS % OF TOTAL ECE GRANTS	NUMBER OF ECE PROJECTS
TOTALS FOR THE PERIOD	11324.7	333.1	100	34
REGIONS				
Latin America	328.7	328.7	2.9	1
Caribbean	2803.3	467.2	24.8	6
Asia & Oceania (incl. Australia)	650.7	216.9	5.8	3
Africa	2794.8	349.4	24.7	8
Europe & Others (incl. USA & Israel)	4197.2	299.8	37.1	14
International (more than 1 country)	550.0	275.0	4.9	2
LOCATION WITHIN COUNTRY				
Urban	6828.5	379.4	60.3	18
Rural	1460.5	208.6	12.9	7
Mixed	3035.7	337.3	26.8	9
TARGET GROUPS				
Pre-schools	7621.2	317.6	67.3	24
Pre-school + parents	2206.6	441.3	19.5	5
Pre-school + parents + community	1162.1	290.5	10.3	4
Community	334.8	334.8	3.0	1
TYPE OF INSTITUTION				
Universities	5472.9	497.5	48.3	11
Governments	3004.1	375.5	26.5	8
Voluntary organisations	2847.7	189.8	25.1	15

argued that large groups of children do not partake in the cultural attainments of our society as a result of social circumstances over which they have no control. Only a series of social measures and provisions for the nursery

school and primary school education, as well as the pre-school period, can in the long run affect a change (van Calcar, 1977).

The stage was thus set for the major effort which was to come in Amsterdam in the school year 1971-72 where, on the initiative of parents, a number of nursery groups had developed the objective of improving general education and conditions, and had been involved with the University of Amsterdam in a study of educational disadvantage in the city which found that

> in the older districts of the city, a rather discouraging situation prevailed: school buildings were antiquated, there were almost no teaching aids, and the teachers complained of immense educational problems. ... Working class children do not have much chance to develop their educational potential which also means that they will not receive the kind of secondary education which would be in accordance with their educational potential. Support for schools with many working class children is urgently required (van Calcar, 1977).

In consequence an emergency counselling service was set up with the aid of city authorities which, in its beginning although not in its development, was essentially compensatory. Volunteers worked for the schools and also with individual children and families but, since the research data had related essentially to the primary schools, the first efforts were also directed towards schools and children at this level. The volunteers rapidly realised that if thorough programmes were to be developed, it would be necessary to work with the official authorities and also to begin to operate with young children both in school settings and within families. It was at this point that the families really became involved.

Programmes within the schools were based to a great extent on curriculum development, materials production and teacher education related to curriculum and to appropriate methods of delivery. Somewhat surprisingly perhaps, given the intellectual climate of the period, the basic theory was founded on Montessori and on the extension of this in nursery schools in England. The hope was that by combining Montessori-derived activities with nursery school experience, an integrated programme would emerge which could

successfully link the infants' school with the primary either in content or method or perhaps both.

A shift away from compensation

This meant a truly innovative approach in that it implied efforts to analyse the primary school curriculum and to reform it in ways appropriate to the knowledge and the skills of the children entering it. The logic led to a rapid shift in the emphasis from compensation. Indeed, writing some years later from hindsight, van Calcar (1977, p.25) suggests that compensation in the simplistic form used in the USA in the 1960s and extended to the UK, may never have been a real objective of the Amsterdam project.

> The simple conception of society in which compensation programmes in themselves are regarded as sufficient for the elimination of inequality of educational opportunities was rejected by the Emergency Counselling Service: the concept poverty is an utterly insufficient explanation for the unfavourable educational situation. Its root lies rather in the lack of material and cultural opportunities which are the result of fundamental social inequality.

The specific pedagogical procedures introduced into primary and secondary schools inevitably drew more and more attention to the role of parents and the community in the improvement of the educational opportunities for children. Such involvement, in line with the developing theory, had indeed been seen as a method as well as an objective aimed at educational innovation assisting the individual child, strengthening the link between family and school and establishing the school as part of the total community. In practice, at least in the early years of the project, the programme was solidly school-based. This is perhaps inevitable in a society in which schools already exist and people are accustomed to the notion that these are institutions which children must attend.

Relationships between school, family and community

Van Calcar (1977) comments: 'a close relation between school, family and neighbourhood is considered essential for achieving the intended educational innovations'. Such a close relationship would make it possible for parents to pay attention to and show interest in their children's development and progress at school and also make it possible for the school to take the world of the children's experience as the starting point for education. In other words, from its beginnings within the school, the project widened out into

group projects related to general improvements of community living within the total neighbourhood. Nonetheless, the focus remained the school. As van Calcar puts its: 'the school should develop into a school-within-its-neighbourhood'.

The Amsterdam project has been a qualified success. Its methods and techniques were not only adopted in the city, but also spread in one form or another into many other local authority education areas within The Netherlands. The role of the Foundation in this has been considerable, partly by the infusion of personnel and funds to enable the work on early childhood education to go forward, but also by enlarging the general scope of the entire enterprise, thereby giving a much greater freedom of movement of an intellectual character for project leaders and personnel.

Apart from its local influence, both the development and outcomes of the project greatly affected Foundation thinking, particularly about methods. Its effects may be seen in suggestions made for amendments to new projects and many of the innovations introduced in Amsterdam were later adapted and adopted in other programmes in other countries.

ATHLONE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE IN SOUTH AFRICA

About this time too, the Foundation had begun to support a project in South Africa which was to have serious implications for its programme. Referring to it in January 1983, in a specially prepared statement for the Trustees (BvLF Project Report, 1983), the Executive Director said that

> over the last decade, the Bernard van Leer Foundation has given a lead in promoting innovation in early childhood care and education in Southern Africa. A planned operation has sought to develop the most effective means of bringing about change on as wide a scale as possible in a very complex society. The South African situation presents a wide variety of special problems. The vast majority of the pre-school population may be considered disadvantaged, particularly in the coloured, black and Indian communities, and the provision of pre-school services for these is totally inadequate. The types of disadvantage vary considerably from situations of long-standing urban poverty, which are similar to the 'inner city' ghetto conditions in industrialised societies, to shanty towns, 'depressed area' poverty, rural poverty among farm

labourers, small landholders in subsistence farming, and in the large resettlement 'camps'. In addition, aspects of the problem are associated with urbanisation and the transition from rural to industrial society; cultural transition and education in a second language; and economic, social and political discrimination.

The involvement with young children in South Africa began with the establishment of the Early Learning Centre (ELC) at Athlone 'as a pre-school education institution for the coloured community'. Although essentially focused on children of pre-school age, the programme was extended to family groups in two quite specific ways: first, by encouraging parents, particularly mothers, to visit the school and the creche in order to work with the teachers and the teachers' aides; secondly, by concentrating on developing a programme of home visitors who 'work with and through the mother ... [to] promote the intellectual, social and physical development of her child(ren); that is – the aim is – to help the mother to provide an adequate and stimulating learning environment within the home itself' (Kessel, 1973). Although the centre of the programme was (and remained) the school, nonetheless, efforts were made to reach families to extend and reinforce the classroom activities.

Practical methods

The educational programme was compensatory, given the notion of its acting as a model for other communities, a research component was also included. The primary objective of the first phase of the project was to develop, in an experimental setting, practical methods for implementing the philosophies of compensatory education, school readiness and community action. The curriculum developed to meet these objectives was unabashedly traditional pre-school. There were, however, facets to the programme which even at this early stage were not typical of the traditional nursery school approach, although they were certainly in line with some of the stated aims for community action. The extended statement of this objective (BvLF, Project Report, 1973b) reads:

> Family and community involvement is regarded as essential, with teachers encouraged to view children and their families in positive terms. And, as a corollary, we accept that pre-school efforts should not be limited to work with children and parents within the confines of the

Centre but should also encompass home-based educational programmes.

There were four sets of activities related to this objective: training and use of teachers' aides, home visiting, parent education and a measure of parent participation in school government. None of these activities features in standard arrangements for traditional nursery schools, except perhaps for the employment of aides in a minor way and some involvement of parents in fundraising activities.

The teacher's aide programme was deliberately designed to forge close links between home and school and was, at least at the beginning, only secondarily envisaged as a means of meeting a shortage of trained personnel for early childhood education work. Trainees were drawn in part from mothers of the children in the Centre and in part from volunteers from other surrounding communities, and gained a grounding in teaching methods from classroom teachers and the teacher supervisor of the project. Para-professionals or teachers' aides had a real part to play in the programme.

Home visiting was at first thought of as an extension of the teacher's aide programme: the hope was that any skills which the mother developed as a teacher's aide would be transferred to the home situation. As the project developed however, the focus of the home visit was an educational programme for children not attending the institution, rather than support services related to children who were at school. The experiment was claimed to be a successful one and was later developed in a number of worthwhile ways.

The parent education component, in the initial period, consisted essentially of monthly meetings at which parents listened to lectures, watched films and participated in discussions on topics such as what children do at the centre and why, the importance of nutrition, birth control, and so on. There was apparently no attempt to develop a systematic programme, partly because of the limited staffing and partly because of the need to capture the interest and regular attendance of women who had little educational background and probably little desire to improve this unless it could be shown to be of relevance to their immediate needs.

The programme for parent participation in school government was originally seen in this context of parent

education. The aim was 'the development of community leadership potential'. The programme met with some difficulties and there is more than a hint of frustration with both teachers and parents in Ann Short's concluding statement (BvLF, Project Report, 1973b):

> In disadvantaged communities, given almost no history of any kind of community action, initiating involvement in the decision making process may indeed prove difficult. However, it seems clear that such involvement must be encouraged on a meaningful and ever increasing basis if 'parent participation' is to be more than an empty, albeit fashionable phrase.

Management in fact remained very largely in control of the professionals and the community had little direct input into policy, curriculum or methods.

A curious history

Athlone ELC has had a curious history, considered in the context of general Foundation development. In some ways it represents a strand in funding which runs counter to the directions taken elsewhere, not so much in recognition of common objectives as in methodologies. It developed a methodological model adopted elsewhere in South Africa and in what was then Rhodesia, but not anywhere else in the world of the Foundation-supported projects. It was a relatively high-cost, deliberately designed demonstration project 'providing a comprehensive service specifically developed to meet the needs of the disadvantaged children in a particular setting' (BvLF, Project Report, 1983).

The later developments in the next phase, starting in 1977, were in two directions: support for other early childhood education institutions in the area and parent-community development programmes. The home-based activities were increased and strengthened and teachers and parents were specifically trained for this work.

Despite these initiatives, however, it was possible to ask whether ELC had really fulfilled its original objective or whether the knowledge and expertise available in the Centre could not be used in more profitable ways. Apart from problems of finance and of providing high quality staffing for other centres, the strategy of developing model centres had been found wanting.

The dissemination strategy originally envisaged had proved ineffective. In South Africa the idea that dissemination could be achieved through the simple replication of programmes of proven validity had been found impracticable, but the effectiveness of this product-oriented approach has also been seriously questioned in other situations, even where material circumstances permitted replication. By its very nature the experimental ELC model provided mainly for research/curriculum development, implementation and evaluation, and it did not provide adequately for the implementation of dissemination strategies requiring careful planning, development of training courses, and the resources to carry them out (BvLF, Project Report, 1983).

Fundamental questions

There remained for the Foundation two fundamental questions: what new or different strategies could be developed to meet the demonstrable need of so many hundreds of thousands of disadvantaged South African children and what contributions could Athlone ELC make, given the high level of professional staff and knowledge which had been evolved? ELC became a demonstration centre and the specialist staff were transferred to an entirely new project in 1978 – the Early Learning Resource Unit (ELRU).

The initiatives at ELC between 1969 and 1972 were of limited immediate value in influencing Foundation policy other than in the negative sense of abnegation of demonstration type, high-quality, expensive models. There has also been in the longer term, reinforcement of the view that community-based models are of far greater relevance and secondly there has been serious consideration of the possible development and use of regional resources as a result of the Athlone experience.

SERVOL IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Meanwhile in the Caribbean, thought was being given to a closely linked set of projects of quite another character. The Foundation began working in Trinidad in 1971 with SERVOL, a voluntary organisation committed to the idea of 'self-development of underprivileged groups in society'. SERVOL began its operations in Laventille, a highly deprived urban area in Port of Spain. It was an area where housing, sanitation and general services were totally inadequate, where unemployment was high and rising, where educational standards of most members of the community were low, where medical standards of nutrition and health left a great

deal to be desired and in which, until the organisation began its work in the face of serious opposition and even hostility, the community was characterised by apathy and resignation, or alternatively, delinquency and crime.

Gerry Pantin's description of an incident in the early operation of the project is revealing about the project's mainspring and its driving force (Pantin, 1979):

> And so it came to pass that on September 8, 1970, a group of limers (in local dialect 'to lime' means to hang around in groups talking, to pass the time) sitting in the morning sun on the kerb at the corner of Foster Street and Plaisance Road in the John John area, were a little astonished when two men, one half the size of the other, walked up to them and the smaller of the two said: 'My name is Gerry Pantin, I am a Catholic priest; this is Wes Hall, the West Indian fast bowler, we'd like to talk to you'.

Pantin, in the first lines of his inspiring book, *A Mole Cricket Called* SUCCOT (Pantin, 1979), asked a pertinent question: 'How were we the priest (trained to teach in a grammar school), and the professional cricketer, to begin a programme of community development in depressed areas?' With disarming simplicity he claims that they answered the question by doing three things:

> First we acknowledged we knew nothing about the problems of the people (let alone how to solve these problems); then we asked the people themselves what they thought their problems were; finally we asked in what ways we might help them to solve those problems. ... The only thing which seemed to unite the people of these areas into a real community was their concern for the education of their small children.

Part of a total programme

Pantin and his colleague Wesley Hall emphasised from the beginning that the battle against disadvantage in the community had to be fought within the community as a whole. The education component, including the pre-schools, was accepted by the community itself as part of a total programme for improving the general quality of life and increasing the probabilities of a productive future for its children and youth.

SERVOL began to develop projects in many spheres: vocational training, agriculture, sports programmes, medical, dental and legal clinics, community projects, small businesses, care of handicapped children, the elderly, the needy and child care and nursery schools. It was largely with the last two and their relationship with the community that the Foundation became involved. When SERVOL made its first contacts in the depressed area the promoters found a number of

> rudimentary pre-schools already in existence in the community. In nearly every case these consisted of a dozen children, a few benches and a woman from the community who was charged with minding the children for three or four hours a day, and, should she be so inclined, with teaching them the alphabet and numbers with the help of a switch picked from a nearby tree (Pantin, 1979).

Given the SERVOL philosophy of non-imposition, of growth from within, there could be no question of adopting the Athlone model. The problem was to take what was there, to accept the people's ideas as they existed and help them to implement those ideas for early childhood education. Eight areas of disadvantage and need were identified and a set of nursery schools established within them in such buildings as could be found or rented. One description of the physical facilities gives a vivid picture of the conditions:

> Schools are housed in community clubs or centres and one in a church hall. With two exceptions space is inadequate for play and creative activity, but considering the area, these facilities are fair, as at every level in the community adequate facilities are restrictive or non-existent. Toilet facilities had to be improved greatly; there was little storage space but this was of little importance at the time, because there was very little material to store. Furniture was adequate in number but inadequate in design, there were no trained teachers available (Pantin, 1979).

Rudimentary training

One trained teacher was found and appointed as a school supervisor and SERVOL announced that it wanted ten girls to be trained as nursery school teachers. They had to be from the local area, and have had some education beyond primary school, either one or two years of secondary school, or a partly finished typist course for instance. In the event, 18 girls applied, "not because they had any burning desire to teach but

simply because they heard that the teachers were going to be given a small allowance and since they were unemployed and needed money it was better than doing nothing'.

After a six-week crash course in the fundamentals of teaching pre-school children, the teachers were assigned to the schools which were opened in October 1971. Given this level of education and training, and the equipment and other facilities available, it is obvious that for the first few months if not years, the nursery schools were little better than childminding centres. However, thanks to the patience and devotion of the supervisor and other professionals who helped out, in the second year of the project an independent assessor was able to write that

> the most encouraging thing about the whole system is the remarkable change that has occurred in the 18 young women who have been the SERVOL schools over the past two years. From shiftless, unemployable, unmotivated girls they have for the most part become purposeful teachers, proud of their status in their community and convinced of the value of what they are contributing to those communities.

The basic philosophy was founded on activity method and above all on realistic attempts to make the work meaningful to the children and to their parents. The self-evaluative accounts of the SERVOL nursery schools after the first three years of their operation are highly critical, even damning in places, but they are also far from pessimistic. The report to the Foundation (BvLE Project Report, 1972) speaks in almost savage terms of the inadequacies of the teachers; the limitations, indeed the almost non-existence of physical facilities in some instances, the indifference of the community to the activities within the school and to the diversification of the duties of the supervisor. Nonetheless, the report concludes:

> It may appear at first sight that the above assessment of the SERVOL Nursery School system is a rather negative one. This would be a mistake. It would be the easiest thing in the world to paint a glamorous picture of what is being done and to a large extent many of the things listed in this 'other type' report would be indeed true. Much good is being done to the individual children in terms of their social awareness, their creativity, their awakening sense of the

world in which they live. In this report, the SERVOL committee have opted to take a realistic view of the schools as situated in their environment, to admit quite humbly and clearly that they represent a small pocket of awakening in the midst of a dreadfully negative attitude to life, and to face the fact that though an impact has been made on the environment, the process is necessarily a slow one.

In the event, BvLF was sufficiently impressed with progress in this first phase to grant further funds for the next period.

SEMINAR ON CARIBBEAN PROJECTS

The growth of projects in the Caribbean and the promising results from PECE in Jamaica formed the background for the Foundation's first seminar, held in Kingston, Jamaica in October 1971. At the time there were five operational projects in the region, and the hope was that by bringing together project personnel and other interested persons, it would be possible to compile a picture of the educational needs of pre-school children in the Caribbean and to consider avenues which might be explored in satisfying these needs. There was also the intention of studying in some detail the oldest, and at that stage, the most influential of all Foundation-supported projects – PECE – while it was still in full operation and to consider its relevance in the broader context of early childhood education in the West Indies (BvLF, 1972).

The title reflected the objective: 'Early Childhood Education in the Caribbean', but many of the conclusions had wider geographical application and more far-reaching educational implications than those limited to the pre-school child. In part, this broadening of scope and dimension resulted from including among the seminar participants Foundation project directors and other experts from the United Kingdom, Kenya, South Africa and The Netherlands, so that ideas and experience outside the region were also available for contrast and comparison. In part it also occurred because there was a deliberate attempt to organise the discussion around a set of theoretical issues, germane to the central topic. The conclusion of the report (BvLF, 1972) foreshadowed a number of policy directions the Foundation was to follow in the next few years, particularly the growing importance of projects based on the disadvantaged community and the child within it rather than on the early childhood education centre. Similarly, there was an emphasis on the need for a multifaceted approach to disadvantage and a clear indication

of the movement away from the compensatory model to the developmental or preventive one. The strategy was still essentially intervention rather than interaction, but even in this dimension, where basic theory, let alone practice, was still very tentative, the Foundation staff and the project personnel at the Jamaican seminar were apparently moving steadily towards the new insights and practices implicit in any interaction model.

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN KENYA

It is also of some importance in terms of the development of Foundation theory and method to look at yet another project of a different kind, this time in Kenya. As in Amsterdam, Cape Town and Port of Spain, it was easy to demonstrate the need for an early education project for disadvantaged children. In this case, the need had already been well recognised and by the end of the 1960s almost a quarter of all children between four and six years of age were involved in pre-schools or nursery schools of one kind or another. The growth had been phenomenal; the reasons for it were manifold, but most important was the popularly held belief that a good nursery school experience in some ways helps a child to learn better in primary school and that such a head start may profoundly influence the entire future course of the child's life. One major problem however, was that the schools, the administration, the staffing, the curricula were not covered by any government ministry at that time. None, in fact, was adequately staffed nor equipped to deal with a pre-school problem let alone with the problems of general early education of the kind discussed and tackled in other programmes. However, it was apparent that the pre-schools which had been developed had grown up more or less autonomously relying on the resources and the ideas of each specific community, in line with the Kenyan official policy of Harambee or self-help by the people.

Lack of trained teachers

The major problem was the lack of properly qualified and properly trained teachers. To quote the proposal document (BvLF, Proposal, 1971b):

> The model head teacher [of a nursery school] has a certificate of primary education plus two or three months' apprenticeship at a home for orphans or physically handicapped. In the cities and at the administrative level under the rural county councils, the very few persons trained as primary teachers struggle to adapt their methods to the younger children.

The curricula and methods offered in these schools inevitably reflected the lack of training of the teachers, the inadequacy of available materials and the fact that the people responsible for the local initiatives which had set up the schools had little idea of any possible alternatives.

Any well-qualified teachers tended to move to the few well-equipped pre-schools in the middle class suburbs of the Kenyan cities, particularly Nairobi, because of better pay and working conditions. In consequence, the setting up of the pre-schools in the rural areas tended subtly to reinforce and perpetuate the differences between Kenya's haves and have nots. There was in Kenya a real awareness of the need to

> intervene in this confused and potentially disruptive situation, [where] there were attempts to identify the pre-schools, to register them and to supervise some of the activities. The Ministry of Social Services [that is, not the Ministry of Education] had set up some courses of nursery teacher training aimed finally at young people who were already working in the schools. (BvLF, Proposal, 1971b)

Within the country there was no means of training the trainers, of improving the staff of the nursery training colleges, or of improving the qualifications and skills of the supervisors of the nursery schools. Furthermore there was a fundamental difference of objectives and policy which interfered with the development of the entire pre-school programme. Under Kenyan law only programmes controlled by the Ministry of Education could provide a curriculum related to preparation for entry to the primary school, 'whereas preparation for academic instruction is of course the chief *raison d'etre* of most of the nursery schools' (BvLF, Proposal, 1971b). There was a potential bone of contention between the parents who had set up the schools for their own communities and the Ministry of Education system.

Training programmes

The Ministry of Education, as the body responsible for teacher education in Kenya, somewhat naturally saw the solution in the provision of training programmes for potential teacher educators for pre-school work, together with the development of a cadre of experts in modern pre-school methods working in a small number of demonstration or model nursery schools in disadvantaged areas. Allied to this there would be a research programme to compare children who had attended the demonstration schools with those who

had gone to ordinary pre-schools and with those not receiving any early childhood education of an institutional kind.

The architects of the plan recognised that there would be no question of adopting a package from overseas. It would be necessary to build a Kenyan curriculum and Kenyan methods from the beginning. Nonetheless the proposal set out some guidelines of a very familiar kind in order to design 'well-rounded programmes, with pre-academic preparation as the capstone'. Among the areas the project hoped to cover were motor development through manipulative tasks, concepts of nutrition and health, parents' role in child development, language development, basic logical operations, concept formation, observation and discrimination abilities, reading, writing and arithmetic in forms appropriate for very young children, and social development. It recognised that in the construction of these integrated approaches, the assistance of many professionals would be needed, such as doctors, social workers and community development workers.

Parental participation

Here indeed was what in later jargon might be termed a family-based competency programme approach. The children were expected to attain a number of quite specific knowledges and skills appropriate to entry to the ordinary primary school system and prospective teachers and trainers of teachers were being educated to help children to do this. The focus was quite specifically on the pre-school. Furthermore, in discussing the operations of the schools within each community, parents would be expected to participate through parents' committees.

> Considerable experience throughout the world has shown that parental understanding and support are crucial to the success of any pre-school programme. In the case of these experimental efforts, such backing is mandatory, since the curriculum is likely to be very different from any others previously known by the parents. Further, it is expected that at each nursery school the parents will make contributions of various sorts, in the Harambee spirit, to the development of the school. (BvLF, Proposal, 1971b)

There was obviously to be little opportunity for parents to be involved in curriculum development or indeed to relate curriculum to the needs of the children within their own specific environment. The intention was that the new curriculum and new methods of instruction would be

introduced into schools and then suggestions would be made as to ways that this could be modified to meet specific needs.

Working in rural areas

During the first phase, the training programme was carried out in Nairobi, and then began to involve teachers from rural areas. In a number of ways this changed the nature of the project. It was impossible for the teachers from these localities to attend programmes demanding long periods away from home. In consequence the courses were redesigned to consist of short-term intensive theoretical work interspersed with teaching practice in their classrooms and in workshops in the local areas close to their homes. The project director's report (BvLF, Project Report, 1977) on the effectiveness of this programme contains a note of surprise that this method

> was found to be educationally valuable. The first course taught trainers and trainees alike. Content emphasised the developing child, how to organise activities to meet his [or her] needs and to enhance these activities by using locally available material. Language development (especially the local language) and help in nutrition received particular emphasis together with the concept of the child's total environment.

Here was indeed a new direction. Success achieved in this first experiment in the rural areas helped the design of fresh programmes in other rural areas and in the redesign of the programme in Nairobi itself. The experience led to attempts to rewrite the early childhood education curriculum.

> The project team were developing sets of pre-school curriculum material while running the training courses. Originally intended to have a national character the material which evolved was more relevant to urban Nairobi than to the rural country areas. Priority was originally placed on work books for children followed by guidelines for teachers. In the event it became necessary to produce a set of manuals relating classroom activities to child development, in the variety of which the trainees themselves participated.

This was real development. In the second phase, also supported by the Foundation, development was directed into

disadvantaged country areas. There was a strong emphasis on teacher re-education, curriculum, and, in a fascinating extension, on community development. The methods used concentrated once more very heavily on the key teachers, the trainers, the supervisors, the on-the-job guidance of teachers and others in nursery school work. The community was involved by working outwards from the school, there was a distinct shift in focus from the child as potential primary school pupil to the development of the child in his or her own environment. This led inevitably to consideration of the specific ways in which the community might be involved.

The intention was to build up information and activities for the community from the projects, to help communities to develop materials for use within the schools, to run seminars and workshops within the community and wherever possible to use local personnel who had specific skills to offer to the school. The focus was still on the school but in an entirely new and different way.

In various stages the programme has been extended to other rural areas and has more recently become consolidated in a national programme funded by the Ministry of Education. The Institute of Education has taken on a new role in the training of trainers and of supervisors but with methods and curriculum derived quite directly from its field experience with the project, as well as from modern theories of child development and early childhood education.

For the Foundation the lessons were many. On the positive side the growing emphasis on programmes rooted within the local communities was strongly reinforced; the focusing of teachers on the curriculum carefully related to the specific needs of the project and not to abstract principles was thoroughly supported; the need to work with the child as a child and not as a potential pupil received further confirmation. On the negative side, the attempt to build up semi-artificial demonstration centres, as had also happened in South Africa, again failed to achieve the results expected of it. The Kenyan project demonstrated how good project personnel, working closely with the Foundation on the one hand and with the local communities on the other, can change programmes as they learn from them in their development. This in many ways is what is meant by good evaluation, and from this too the Foundation learned a great deal.

SEMINAR ON CURRICULUM

The second in the series of international seminars, held in Jerusalem, Israel at the end of 1972, also made a valuable contribution to Foundation thinking. The choice of curriculum as the theme was reinforced by the debate then raging in academic journals, in meetings of learned societies and elsewhere on the most appropriate model for early childhood education. In its essence, the debate was about the curriculum and its implementation: behaviour modification or cognitive development? competency or enrichment? language or motor skills? Piaget or Bruner? Bereiter and Engelman or Weikart? back to Froebel or Montessori or Susan Isaacs or Bank Street?

As well as project personnel from countries outside Israel, distinguished academics and research workers in early childhood education were asked by the Foundation to participate in the seminar, together with observers from other organisations such as UNESCO, OECD and the Ford and Carnegie Foundations.

The seminar report is something of a charter for early childhood education; it is a declaration of principles of both good theory and sound practice. Some of the statements are open to theoretical challenge, depending on one's point of view; some of the statements have been shaken if not disproven by later research findings; but taken as a whole, they represent one of the most coherent and self-consistent sets of statements about early childhood education to be found anywhere in the voluminous literature.

The influence of the seminar on Foundation policy was considerable. The movement from compensation to prevention was accelerated; and the trend from intervention to interaction became more pronounced; indeed the word intervention does not occur anywhere in the report. Once more exchange of ideas about methods and techniques produced changes in activities within projects.

Partly as a consequence of development in educational theory and practice and partly derived from its own experience, such as that just outlined, the Foundation began to accept the view that ECE programmes were less than effective unless the parents of the children were also actively involved within the context of the institution.

Thus at this stage, although many of the activities supported by the Foundation were still focused on the school, there was a clear movement towards a concept of early childhood education beyond that of the within-school compensation model and towards a more developmental model.

5.

The third period was, at first sight, one of consolidation, of maintaining the pattern which had begun to emerge in the earlier years. In a sense, it appears as though the Foundation was testing the strength, efficacy and relevance of the range, rather than examining the limits of the typology. Yet to accept this without qualification would be highly misleading. There were clear signs of change, of awareness of a need to sharpen the focus, to re-examine the assumptions as well as the methods.

At the beginning of this period the Foundation made some adjustments to its Statutes. Under the influence of both general international findings and the Foundation's own field experience, Oscar van Leer, as Chairman of the Trustees, and Willem Welling, the Executive Director, recommended dropping the emphasis on children's intellectual potential. The Foundation rapidly accepted the view that to concentrate on the intellectual aspects is not only highly undesirable, it is also probably impossible. New Statutes were written partly to take account of a number of administrative changes, but more important, to state the objectives in more precise form. The vital paragraph (BvLF, Policy, 1973) reads:

> The objective of the Foundation shall be – without any profit motive – to undertake or support, with emphasis on the former, projects of general social significance with an idealistic and human purpose, preferably, if not exclusively, in countries where a van Leer company is established, and predominantly projects for the benefit of youth, in particular any theoretical or practical project aimed at enabling children and youth through school-going age who are impeded through the social and cultural inadequacy of their background and/or environment nevertheless to achieve the greatest possible realisation of their innate potential.

INVOLVEMENT WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

Perhaps the most significant development during the period was the indication of some movement of project focus towards greater involvement with parents and the community. Within each of the four projects described in this chapter – from Australia, Italy, Malaysia and Brazil – it is possible to discern clear shifts towards the beginnings of the new directions which were canvassed and discussed in the next few years and which led to new policy decisions in the 1980s. The Brazilian project is also interesting because of its inclusion of a health and nutrition component, which demonstrates the importance not only of early childhood education, but also early childhood care. The only seminar held during the period, which dealt with innovation, reinforced this approach through its recognition of the educational difficulties faced by children who were in poor health.

MT. DRUITT IN AUSTRALIA

The Mt. Druitt project in its generic and initial design is in many ways an ideal example of one extreme of the typological range during this period. Situated in a housing estate on the edge of Sydney in Australia, the nature of the disadvantage was social and in a relative sense, economic. A casual stroll through the Mt. Druitt area did not suggest degrading poverty. It was a fringe urban area of low socio-economic status young families, with high unemployment rates, a disproportionately large number of pre-school children and very few community facilities. When the project began among this community of some 70,000 people, the average age was about eight years; the mean age of the adult population was only 22 or 23 and the nature of the project had to reflect these demographic characteristics.

There were few local industries and those men who did have jobs, usually semi-skilled or unskilled, had great distances to travel to work each day. Few women were in gainful employment: the demands of young families and limited local opportunities presented hurdles too great to overcome. The people felt isolated from their original families who frequently lived in the inner city. There was a high incidence of marital breakdown and single parent families were common. Delinquency rates tended to be high and mental illness was comparatively frequent.

The children were for the most part reasonably well nourished, superficially well housed, well clothed and had excellent state welfare services available – at least in principle

Table 4: Grants and No. of ECE/ECCE Projects by Region, by Location Within Country, by Target Group, and by Type of Institution – 1973-1976 (in 000s of adjusted guilders to 1965 base)

	ECE GRANTS IN ADJUSTED GUILDERS (000s)	AVERAGE VALUE OF GRANT	GRANTS AS % OF TOTAL ECE GRANTS	NUMBER OF ECE PROJECTS
TOTALS FOR THE PERIOD	11458.9	293.8	100	39
REGIONS				
Latin America	2515.0	419.2	22.0	6
Caribbean	550.2	183.4	4.8	3
Asia & Oceania (incl. Australia)	1370.7	274.1	12.0	5
Africa	1548.3	258.1	13.5	6
Europe & Others (incl. USA & Israel)	5164.6	286.9	45.1	18
International	310.1	310.1	2.7	1
LOCATION WITHIN COUNTRY				
Urban	8651.2	309.0	75.5	28
Rural	144.2	288.8	12.6	5
Mixed	1363.5	227.3	11.9	6
TARGET GROUPS				
Pre-schools	5931.2	312.2	51.8	19
Pre-school + parents	1947.0	486.8	17.0	4
Pre-School + parents + community	2337.3	172.1	20.4	13
Community	1243.4	414.5	10.9	3
TYPE OF INSTITUTION				
Universities	2288.1	254.2	20.0	9
Governments	5746.0	383.1	50.1	15
Voluntary organisations	3424.8	228.3	29.9	15

if not always in practice. There were good primary schools with reasonably well-educated, excellently trained teachers, a wide range of materials and equipment and a curriculum well up to international standards. Yet by Australian criteria, these children were greatly disadvantaged.

Five programmes

Five programmes were identified, four institution-based and the fifth in the homes of the children. The four programmes were a cognitive programme based on the work of Weikart *et al* (1971), a behaviourist programme based on that of Bushell (1973), a competency programme derived from Almy (1975), Anderson and Messick (1974) and Butler *et al* (1975). The fourth programme, called contemporary, reflected the philosophy and methods most commonly in use in Australian pre-schools and was essentially in the traditional early childhood mode of the United Kingdom. The home-based programme was entirely eclectic, since a specific curriculum and methods had to be devised by the teachers for each individual child.

A well-qualified programme associate was assigned to each of the five. The curriculum for each of the first four was developed in a specific school by the programme assistants, the programme director and the teachers in collaboration with the school staff as a whole, and in the case of the competency programme, in collaboration with parents. Schools were supplied with materials and equipment selected and/or developed by the programme assistants and the teachers. For the pre-school components, new buildings were constructed within the grounds of the existing primary schools and lengthy briefing sessions were held with principals, teachers and parents. Contact was established with the health authorities who examined each child, conducted a diet survey and a nutritional survey and monitored general physical development. In other words, here was a deliberate attempt to discover the disadvantages, the deficiencies in each child and to design programmes directly and specifically related to these. This was in line with the philosophy of compensation.

Using para-professionals

The intention was to discover how each programme worked best in what kinds of circumstances, so that parents and teachers in the long run could be given an opportunity of choosing which seemed best suited to their needs and those of their children. The programme was carried beyond the pre-school into the first two years of the next level. Further, and in the New South Wales context this was most important, para-professionals were introduced into the system. This had never been tried before in the New South Wales Government schools. It is perhaps one of the most important outcomes that teachers accepted and worked enthusiastically with such people in their classrooms. There was also a careful and

deliberate attempt to involve parents in the work of the school, not so much by taking the school to the parents in this case as bringing the parents to the school. Their activities became accepted as a normal part of the school life and in many ways this changed the nature of the programme and the nature of the objectives.

During the first three-year phase of the project, this relationship between home and school had become so apparent to the project team that major efforts were made in the second phase to involve parents in an active, purposeful way in the activities of the institution. School and community in Mt. Druitt became more part one of the other than is usual in Australia where the school tends to be a prison wall when viewed from either side.

Project outcomes

What came out of it? First several of the innovative programmes and many of the methods were taken over and adapted often in an improved form by schools and teachers in other places. The home-based programme spread very rapidly in a number of quite different ways in Mt. Druitt itself. It has taken on a form of home visitors who work directly with parents and children on issues related not only to school problems but to general programmes of parenting. It was a novel and successful initiative. There were other inferences as the official report (Braithwaite, 1983) points out:

> First, the children enjoyed project pre-school, kindergarten and Year One experiences in the classrooms. They were happy, cheerful, busy little people. One need only visit the classrooms, look at the video tapes, speak to teachers and parents to know that this is true. And Mt. Druitt, regrettably, was often not a particularly happy place. The project gave these children and their successors worthwhile experiences which would not have been theirs otherwise. It is fair to claim that the pre-schools met many of the objectives of the people of Mt. Druitt even if they did not achieve all those set by the professional educators.
>
> Secondly, and more technically the evidence would suggest that in the short term pre-school and follow-through programmes had little effect on school performance in the narrow sense. In the very short term, a year or so, there were some effective outcomes but these, in the current jargon, 'washed out' by the end of Year Two or Year Three.

This is the usual worldwide experience but it is worth saying with the Head Start experts in the United States that to limit one's assessment of the situation to this is to ignore many outcomes not measured by the standard tests of school achievement. It is also to ignore the real possibility of long term effects.

The major outcome of the Mt. Druitt experiment for the Foundation was the demonstration that programmes entirely within school, however well designed and executed, cannot have the major effects hoped and planned for unless they are strongly supported by parallel programmes within the home and community. It is highly significant that although the home-based programme for any one child lasted for only one year, the effects were longer lasting than those of any other programme.

LIMBIATE IN ITALY

The second project to be described for this period took place in Limbiate, a satellite township of Milan in Italy. It resembled Mt. Druitt in a number of ways related to the artificiality of the town itself and in the lack of facilities and amenities for children, but there were also many differences which imposed even more disadvantage on the Italian children. The environment children faced in Limbiate was difficult both physically and socially. There were language problems, in that many of the families had immigrated to Limbiate in search of work from areas outside the region, and spoke dialects which were not used in the school.

The children in this area, like their families, were disadvantaged partly economically but to a much greater extent socially, in that they had considerable difficulty in becoming integrated into the general community culture. Apart from general educational objectives with the target group, essentially the children, there was from the beginning the further hope that by involving parents and other adults in the running of the school, a sense of community would develop which was sadly lacking. By working with teachers and children the members of the community would learn to work together, first on behalf of the school and then for the community itself. That is, it was planned that a kind of secondary target – the community itself – would gradually evolve.

IARD, a privately funded body concerned with research and development in education, had become involved in an

attempt to change the conduct of education in Limbiate schools at every level through compensatory programmes. Its methodology was to bring to a small number of selected schools some equipment and materials specifically designed to improve pedagogical practice and, by introducing specialist workers into the schools to work alongside the teachers, to introduce these materials into the classrooms, particularly at primary and infant levels.

Teacher support

A major shift was made from direct intervention in the classroom towards teacher support through in-service training and provision of information and materials to teachers as well as to the children. The programme in fact became much more directed towards teachers in the elementary and later the high schools than towards young children. Nonetheless it attempted to improve the general quality of education and hence of life in Limbiate through a series of quite definite steps. Among these were seminars to demonstrate to the teachers new methods, techniques, ideas and materials within specific subject areas, and discussions about ways in which these might be used to develop curricula within the schools. These were reinforced by in-service training planning sessions for teachers within a documentation centre set up in Limbiate, and specific workshops in which teachers were able to practice new skills and ideas in creative arts which could later be transferred to the classroom. The small technical teams attached to the project worked closely with the teachers in the classroom in an attempt to reinforce their activities. There was a continuing effort to examine and test new materials becoming available in the international journals and in Italy itself and to look at ways in which these might be adapted to the needs of the Limbiate project. Periodic meetings of parents were held so that they could begin to understand what was happening to their children in their schools and to discuss the developmental needs of children and the ways in which child rearing practices could be adapted to these needs. An information service was built up with regular reports to teachers and parents about what was happening in the schools and about new developments in education in Italy and elsewhere. Throughout the project there was an increasing use of video tape, partly as a teaching medium but also as a way of helping teachers to analyse their own methods and styles. In particular, attention was paid to the nature of the verbal interaction between teachers and the children. The entire philosophy clearly attempted to integrate

the school within the host community to improve the nature of child rearing practices and to some extent to use different teaching methods and different techniques of curriculum development to improve these relations (BvLF, Project Report, 1976a).

As might be expected the programme ran into some problems. It was assumed that the teachers and the administrators were somewhat further along the professional road than they in fact were. Even when some of the teachers became conversant with the new methods and ideas and began to use them effectively, their colleagues were somewhat suspicious and at times downright critical. However, it is clear from the follow-up studies that the schools in which the IARD-Foundation programme has been introduced have been looked on with a great deal of pride by the people in the areas. They believe that Limbiate is more forward looking than its neighbours and there have been deliberate attempts in recent years to enhance this by involving local political leaders and church leaders in the development of the programme. Whereas in the early years there was a real separation between school and community, this has gradually been broken down in the course of the project.

In a sense this is another way of saying that project methods cannot be fully successful if they are imposed. Successful projects for disadvantaged children, as the Foundation was rapidly realising, must be based on an interaction between the school, the family, community and the funding institution. External imposition is not a successful mode of operation.

ECE IN MALAYSIA

The third project for discussion in this period was supported in Malaysia in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. First impressions are that its siting in the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) of the Ministry and its title, the Compensatory Education Project (CEP), firmly categorise it. It would appear to imply the development of curricula and methods specifically devoted to the amelioration of disadvantage imposed by the social, economic and cultural conditions.

The Malaysian Education Department had recognised a major problem and had been able to isolate and identify elements which would contribute to its solution, but lacked the means, both professional and economic, to develop techniques for resolution of the problem. The project sought

to change the nature of present pre-schools, particularly in rural areas of the country, by developing new curriculum materials more appropriate to the contexts in which the pre-school operate and by involving teachers in a new approach to the provision of pre-school education for deprived children (BvLF Newsletter, No.21, 1977).

Emphasising national values

Following Malaysian independence, the government embarked on a major review and reconstruction of the education system which had been inherited from the British. The new system was seen in part as essential for development and in part as a means of emphasising national values in a country comprising three major socio-cultural and linguistic groups: the indigenous Malays, the Chinese and the Indians. In the colonial period, very broadly speaking, the Malays had lived in villages and had been concerned essentially with agriculture and related trades; the Chinese, in the main, resided in the cities and large towns and in the mining areas and had been employed in commerce, industry and the civil service, whereas the majority of the Indian population lived and worked as indentured labourers on the great rubber estates.

The education system was much in line with this. The language of instruction in the university and the teachers' colleges, in the secondary schools and in the senior grades of the primary schools was English. The national language proclaimed soon after independence was Bahasa Malaysia but this had not been formally adopted as the language of instruction in the primary school until 1970 and was planned for the secondary schools progressively by grade until the late 1970s and early 1980s. For most children, therefore, school had been conducted in a foreign language and this was seen as a disadvantage. With the introduction of Bahasa Malaysia there was an immediate need for curriculum development in the teaching of Bahasa Malaysia as a language and then from 1970 as the means of instruction in all other subjects. The problem of teacher education was consequently an immediate and pressing one. It was to meet this need that CDC was created and one of its major activities was CEP.

Compensation in this context had thus a double meaning. The earlier education system in English had inevitably favoured the Chinese in relation to their employment and residence. The number of Malays and Indians able to enter the secondary schools was small, apart from the children of

wealthy upper class families. Consequently, their entry to higher education and hence many occupations was also limited. The new school system was seen as a means of, first and foremost, educational compensation and secondly as a remedy for this situation. Thus, in one sense, the Compensatory Education Project was one of positive discrimination in favour of the Malays. The other sense was the more common one of providing better and more appropriate materials and methods of education for socially and economically disadvantaged children, irrespective of ethnic affiliation.

Initial problems

Problems arose almost immediately. CDC had been established essentially to solve reasonably well-researched curriculum and teacher education problems and was working with a school system whose functions and objectives were legally established and developed. This, however, was far from true of the somewhat amorphous early childhood education structure.

Pre-schools were run by at least two if not three ministries, by religious bodies, by voluntary organisations and by private citizens, without any consistent or agreed-upon philosophy, major procedures or organisational structure. What was not realised at first, either by the educational authorities in Malaysia or by the Foundation, was that because of the conglomerate of institutions with which it would eventually have to deal, any CDC project related to early childhood education would have to develop a new set of functions and hence accommodate its existing structure to the new demands placed on it. While CDC had developed structures relevant to its original tasks, those structures were not relevant, even in the most general of senses, to the ECE area. There was no basic curriculum: there was no sound local research on child growth and development; there were very few trained early childhood education teachers and still fewer professionals with the knowledge and skill in ECE to develop a major project within the operational structures of the institution.

It must be added that there are very few professionals anywhere in the world with knowledge, skill and expertise in the development of curriculum and materials, teaching methods and teacher education for young children living in villages in developing societies. Malaysia was far from being alone.

In the event, a novel solution evolved: an overall project for compensatory and preventive education was undertaken by CDC which then split the project into three inter-related components – pre-school, primary schools and social action -- each with its own professional team. Partly by working in a specifically organised experimental programme within CDC, and partly by classroom testing of materials from the field, a 'programme for ECE' package was developed. The structure for the development of the package and operation of an experimental playgroup were related to these specific functions.

Development of materials

Beyond this was a special set of problems for the early childhood education programme in that from the beginning it 'aimed at identifying the needs and problems faced particularly by socially disadvantaged children and developing strategies and resource materials to help them overcome their problems', however, 'the ultimate goal is *preventive* and not remedial education' (BvLF Newsletter, No.21, 1977). The project activities consequently had to be focused on the areas where the majority of such children were located: in the rural areas at some distance from the capital and CDC. This clearly implied development of methods and materials related to aspects of development in addition to the purely cognitive problems with which CEP as a whole was basically concerned.

The methodology however, was very much in line with that of the overall programme and this in turn led to some specific difficulties. A package of suggestions and try-out materials and techniques were developed in an urban location by highly trained and skilled professionals. The package was then submitted for discussion by professionals in the field of early childhood education including representatives of the various ministries and agencies with a vested interest in ECE. Following this, the materials were distributed to a variety of schools from which feedback was obtained. This was essentially the model used and developed by CDC in its general primary and secondary school programmes. At this stage, no activities were devoted to work with teachers as such. The materials were produced in Kuala Lumpur and distributed without any attempt at workshops or in-service training programmes. Indeed one of the CEP project staff, Tan Lee Kiang, remarks somewhat sadly in her article on the project (BvLF Newsletter, No.21, 1977) that in the rural pre-schools:

the majority of teachers are at a loss as to the effective use of the package provided by the programme for early childhood education and other environmental sources. Organisation of activities is often very traditional and stereotyped. There is obviously a great need for intensification of project staff supervision of these centres.

Working beyond the school

There remained the problem of working beyond the school with parents and community in the fashion envisaged by the planners of the project. Fortunately, there was the possibility of working with a parallel set of activities, the Family Development Programme (FDP), which was part of the national community development plan. This covered two interrelated fields, home economics and early childhood education, although not conducted by the Ministry of Education as such. The FDP provided opportunities for rural women 'to acquire knowledge, skills and status and to enable them to participate and contribute effectively to rural development'. Local women between the ages of 18 and 35 were selected for training essentially to become extension workers in family development and home economics generally. They were taken out of their villages, given a brief training programme and sent back to work as village developers. On many occasions they were employed, despite their lack of specific training in the role, as teachers in the village pre-schools. Costs of facilities for these people were borne by the local communities.

The early childhood education component of CDP tried very hard indeed to work with the village development people but certain difficulties inevitably arose. Further efforts were made by the project to train supervisors. These were successful primary school teachers who were given a brief period of intensive work on techniques of early childhood and they attempted to supervise and assist the early childhood education in the schools but again to quote Tan Lee Kiang:

> The short period available for training would not permit them to make sufficient impact on the clientele, the pre-school teachers. The demands of their own school work often mean that they were unable to give of their best. Furthermore the organisational structure of this tended to break down.

Because there was such a desperate need for an early childhood education programme, in the context of the early

1970s it was inevitable that overseas experience and even more frequently overseas theories were used in the production of the materials. With experience, there were later efforts to develop specifically Malaysian materials related to child rearing practices and needs within the villages. Perhaps more important, from the point of view of the Foundation, there was a fairly steady shift away from the production and distribution of relatively expensive, sophisticated equipment towards the use of local materials and, more vital still, an attempt to involve families, particularly mothers, specifically and directly in the learning experiences. To quote the article again: 'the realisation of the need for laying a good solid educational foundation while the child is young has resulted on the emphasis within the project on the pre-school component', and hence on the mothers.

At the early childhood education level this worked reasonably well but the issue at lower primary was largely unresolved. The overall object was simply to identify and remedy learning problems encountered by disadvantaged pupils. The project staff admitted that in the long run prevention was more important than amelioration, but in the early years concentration was essentially on compensation. There were considerable efforts in the lower primary sector, as in the pre-school, to help teachers to become more sensitive to pupils' learning problems. It was admitted quite openly that 'the extension of compensatory efforts depends on the teachers'. The issue of teacher attitudes and methods remained to a large extent unresolved. Most if not all compensatory programmes focus on retraining of teachers, but when they are not particularly well educated and moreover are carefully drilled in specific techniques and methods, to expect them to adapt new attitudes and values to a highly sophisticated set of procedures is to ask a great deal.

Nonetheless the ECE component has had important and long term effects on education in Malaysia. From the Foundation's point of view this was a further step towards early childhood education for the whole child and not only for the child as a pupil. Indeed Tan Lee Kiang concludes her article, perhaps a little wistfully:

> It is generally agreed that the education of the child is the joint responsibility of the home, the school and the community. The most effective programme for the child

results only if a cooperative working relationship is established between the home and the school.

And the Foundation would surely have answered 'Amen'.

SLUM CONDITIONS IN BRAZIL

The project area in the northern Brazilian city of Recife in the State of Pernambuco was in a long established slum (*favela*) near the dockland. It had grown relatively quickly because of migration from the north and the north-east, which had become areas of great poverty as a result of the decline of the agricultural economy. The people lived in shanties, which they built from scrap tin, brick and wood. The characteristic phenomena of the *favela* were ever present: unemployment, overcrowding, malnutrition, incompatibility between the child rearing practices of the home and the demands of the school. Crime and delinquency rates were high and increasing and the 3,000-odd families which raised their children in this neighbourhood did so, as in the slums of most great cities, in an ever-worsening atmosphere of hopelessness.

The State Government of Pernambuco had attempted to meet the problem earlier by building traditional elementary schools, but had recognised by the end of 1972 that this did not by itself raise the level of educational attainment of the children of a depressed population: high numbers of children repeated classes; dropout was almost endemic; illiteracy was not falling.

To remedy this situation, the State educational authority prepared a project for young children which would not be compensatory in the traditional sense but would rather attempt to develop new and innovative programmes related to the specific abilities, capacities and needs of the children themselves within their own environment.

It lacked the resources, both of expertise and immediate finance, although it was prepared to make a major contribution in the latter respect. The Ministry to which the grant was eventually made, had from the beginning, wished to involve the parents of the neighbourhood, teachers from the neighbouring primary schools, and the community in general in the project. A decision was reached to establish an early childhood centre which would form the administrative office for the project and also be the formal departmental institution responsible.

In addition, the Ministry invited a local higher educational institution, the Instituto Joaquim Nabuco, to cooperate on technical and professional problems related to the project. There has also been major involvement of health authorities, so that there was a nutritional and general medical component to the entire project.

Two curricula

Two separate curricula were devised: one to make effective use of the local environment so as to offset those influences which apparently were having a negative effect on the children's progress at school, and the other a modification of the standard curriculum in general use in kindergartens. Efforts were made to compare school performance in these two curricula but there were very few differences except in terms of local adaptation and local knowledge.

The project ran into familiar problems (BvLF Newsletter, No.22, 1977):

> It has been a very real problem, few teachers participating in the project have had any previous training or experience in pre-school education and one of the project's heaviest tasks has been the continual retraining of these teachers to meet the demands of the work as it moves forward.

The Brazilian case is a unique one which has not been repeated in detail elsewhere. Its interest is in the way in which it illustrates the flexibility of the Foundation in attempts to promote innovative structures as well as innovative procedures.

Improvement in nutrition

It is of some interest to note that the emphasis is put on training and not on general education at the same time, particularly since the project has such an involvement in a philosophy of total child development and not merely cognitive outcomes. Perhaps the most important, certainly the most rewarding, of the outcomes however, has been the very great improvement in the nutritional standards of the children. This has been partly because of provision of specific meals but it has been perhaps even more because parents have become involved in collecting data on the children's development, in taking an interest in diet and in ways of using local foods effectively. They join in discussions on health and nutritional problems and discuss practical ways in which they might be available to teachers in a useful way in the classrooms. There was also an important involvement.

particularly by parents, in the collection of local waste and in converting it into useful play materials for the children. Here was a firm indication of shift, even within a project where original stated aims had been compensation through traditional pre-school methods. It was not lost on the Foundation that parents were much more likely to be actively involved when they could clearly see positive results of their efforts.

SEMINAR ON INNOVATION

The third seminar, held in May 1974, returned to the Caribbean, this time to Curaçao in the Netherlands Antilles and took as its theme 'Innovation in Early Childhood Education'. Since the first Caribbean seminar, projects in Jamaica, Trinidad, Dominica and the Netherlands Antilles had come to some maturity. They had developed in quite different ways with specific unique characteristics and it was time to take stock; to examine what the complex of endeavours had to offer for an understanding and appreciation of the course of early childhood education in the region and the contribution of the Foundation to this. Despite the regional focus, there was a development of broader and more general concern to the Foundation.

In Jerusalem, the centrepiece had been the innovative curriculum. In Curaçao it was the teacher as innovator. Participation was heavily regional: staff of the projects themselves, senior officials from the educational authorities of a number of Caribbean states and territories; academics from the Universities of the West Indies and Guyana; but there was a leavening of senior people concerned with early childhood education in the nearby Latin American countries of Brazil, Venezuela and Colombia, and also some experts from projects in the United Kingdom and The Netherlands. There was a reasonable degree of continuity from Jerusalem in that some five or six people, apart from Foundation staff, attended both seminars. On the other hand the proportion of academics was much lower.

It might have been anticipated that, given the regional interest and representation, concentration would have tended to be on more pragmatic issues. In the event this was not so. Although there was intensive discussion of the special and immediate problems of each individual project and of practical steps to be taken to alleviate the condition of children in disadvantaged areas of the Caribbean, concentration turned out to be on three major themes: child

rearing practices and the development of the Caribbean child; the teacher as the core of innovation; and problems of linking school and community. All three of these issues have far greater implications than the purely domestic ones of the region. The trends to prevention and interaction were strongly in evidence. There was considerable concern with the nutritional and metabolic problems of the child born in poverty, and great stress was laid on the value of food and health programmes within communities as well as within the school. To quote the report (BvLF, 1974b):

> Close cooperation between education and health agencies is called for, with particular need to identify at an early stage children with failing health. Educators should be made aware of the inevitable self-centredness caused by discomfort and illness and the consequent inability to respond to external stimuli by a suffering child. Impairment of learning potential is a fact.

This was getting to the very heart of the Foundation's basic concern and basic philosophy.

Thus, despite the practical emphasis or perhaps because of it, the second Caribbean seminar represented a further stage in the development of Foundation philosophy and practice; a further movement towards considering the education of the young child within the total setting of his or her early life in a particular community. Isolation of the disadvantaged child within a compensatory classroom, which had been seen by many as the answer to the problem of disadvantage in the 1960s, was viewed somewhat sceptically. To read the report is to become aware of an increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary programmes aimed at the total community of poverty and disadvantage and at the school within that community rather than at the individual child. Because the majority of participants at this seminar were project personnel concerned with day to day problems in the community, in families and in schools, the development of theoretical perspectives of a new kind represented their thinking as much as that of the small minority of academics and senior administrators. Not least of the Foundation's achievements in early childhood education has been the fact that practitioners in the projects have grown to examine their own work critically and to evolve from that examination and from mutual discussion, a theory and philosophy of early childhood education within the community.

That is to say that although in many ways this third period, as was said at the beginning, was one of consolidation, nonetheless there were clear internal signs of movement, of development, of growth. These would bear rather more fruit in the next period.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE

Although it is impossible to determine precisely when, at some point during this fourth period, the concept of early childhood care as well as education became an integral part of Foundation thinking and practice; the four projects described in this chapter – from Argentina, Colombia, Israel and Spain – all serve to illustrate some of the means by which this development was occurring. Two seminars during the period, one in Malaysia and the other in Colombia, helped to crystallise thinking on the means of sustaining innovative change and on ways to increase parental and community involvement in innovative programmes.

An editorial in a 1978 Foundation *Newsletter* captured some of the change that was beginning to occur. 'The years 1975 to 1978 have been a revolutionary period in the life of the institution. It has been a time when the first wave of projects drawing heavily upon compensatory theory have been progressively phased out and a new range, with perhaps a less deterministic slant, attuned to community needs rather than preconceived prescriptions, has been ushered in.'

Such statements are further evidence of the Foundation's commitment to a clearly expressed objective which has not changed, allied to a flexibility which permits changed methods and techniques as experience and theory have led it to deeper insights. The evidence of willingness to accept innovation within itself, as well as within the projects is impressive; the fact that as the perspectives change the organisation is prepared to say so in precise terms in its official publications is equally so.

The fourth period was one of growth, not only conceptually but also in terms of the number of projects supported and the total funds granted. As many grants were made in these four years (75) as in the previous eight (73) and in adjusted guilders the funds for ECE projects reflected this. These trends were paralleled by shifts in the target groups. For the first time the proportionate amount of grants to pure

pre-school projects was significantly less than to projects involving parents, parents plus community and the community as such. Also, a trend began to appear towards somewhat greater proportionate emphasis on rural areas than in the earlier periods. There was also an interesting change in the nature of the growth to projects in OECD type countries. The average proportion of funds to such projects compared with those of developing countries did not change significantly but the activities became somewhat less diffuse, more highly focused on specific groups of disadvantaged children. Table 5 illustrates some of these developments.

FAMILY EDUCATION IN ARGENTINA

The title of the Argentinean project – Family Education as an Alternative Pre-school Provision in Rural Argentina – was itself in many ways indicative of the trend away from pure pre-school projects. A total reorganisation of education which had begun in Argentina in 1977 could be seen as favouring the urban upper and middle classes, in that it transferred responsibility for early childhood education to local authorities, themselves dependent on municipal taxes for their funds. As a consequence, proper facilities or even moderately adequate provisions were not available in the poor areas of the cities and even less so in the depressed countryside. In addition the 'pre-school was very much on the Western traditional model and as such totally unrelated to the needs of the rural disadvantaged'. There was however, a great deal of pressure in country areas as well as in the cities towards provision of ECCE programmes.

A private organisation concerned with research and development in education, the *Centro de Investigaciones Educativas* (CIE), after careful study and some discussions with Foundation-supported projects in Venezuela, Colombia and Spain, approached BvLF for support to mount an experimental innovative programme in collaboration with the Education Department of the rural province of Chaco in northern Argentina. It was reasonably easy to demonstrate from accumulated evidence that rural children in Argentina were greatly disadvantaged in many ways, in health and nutrition, in educational provision and facilities, in occupational opportunity and so on, not only in relation to urban children within the country but also in absolute terms. CIE argued that a programme for young children in deprived areas should be focused on the family and proposed a programme with four fundamental objectives (BvLF, Proposal, 1977a). These were: promoting the overall

Table 5: Grants and No. of ECE/ECCE Projects by Region, by Location Within Country, by Target Group, and by Type of Institution – 1977-1980 (in 000s of adjusted guilders to 1965 base)

	ECE GRANTS IN ADJUSTED GUILDERS (000s)	AVERAGE VALUE OF GRANT	GRANTS AS % OF TOTAL ECE GRANTS	NUMBER OF ECE PROJECTS
TOTALS FOR THE PERIOD	22693.3	302.6	100.0	75
REGIONS				
Latin America	7476.3	439.8	32.9	17
Caribbean	951.0	190.2	4.2	5
Asia & Oceania (incl. Australia)	1573.7	262.3	6.9	6
Africa	3736.9	287.5	16.5	13
Europe & Others (incl. USA & Israel)	8826.6	284.7	38.9	31
International (more than 1 country)	128.8	42.9	0.6	3
LOCATION WITHIN COUNTRY				
Urban	11191.6	319.8	49.3	35
Rural	5221.4	290.1	23.0	18
Mixed	6280.3	285.5	27.7	22
TARGET GROUPS				
Pre-schools	9652.8	275.8	42.5	35
Pre-school + parents	3816.0	346.9	16.8	11
Pre-School + parents + community	3990.9	307.0	17.6	13
Community	5233.6	327.1	23.1	16
TYPE OF INSTITUTION				
Universities	4220.5	281.4	18.6	15
Governments	11721.5	334.9	51.7	35
Voluntary organisations	6751.3	270.1	29.8	25

development of the young child, but more specifically assisting in the early acquisition of 'survival' skills; working within families to build capacity for generating these skills in children; ensuring that the changes brought about within families' capabilites extend to other areas of children's

development and to children of other ages; and carrying out a comparative study of the relative cost effectiveness of home-based programmes as against formal pre-school structures in such areas and communities.

These objectives fit well with some of the directions in which BvLF was moving in the late 1970s. The focus was on development rather than on compensation and on family rather than on the institution. On the other hand, at least in the early stages of the project, the emphasis was very much on the cognitive area. The 'survival skills' turned out to be reading, writing and arithmetic before entering primary school. Although there is in the third objective more than a hint of a desire to widen the focus to other areas of child growth, nonetheless the emphasis at this stage was on preparation for school. There was also in the minds of the proposers the hope that the horizons of the parents might be widened, that the techniques of imparting survival skills would also be applied in other areas of parenting, but there were no specific plans for such developments.

Parental participation

The description of the project, in an official Foundation account (BvLF Newsletter, No.31, 1981), shows a growing sophistication in the nature of parental participation.

> The project ... devised and has now completed an experimental training programme for professional 'family educators'. These educators have in turn set up a special training programme for parents from selected areas. The programme, which involves a group of 80 parents, aims to help them to acquire the skills and attitudes necessary for them to improve the educational climate for all their children, not only those of pre-school age. With newly developed materials they learn how to teach their children the basic skills. They also learn to pay special attention to their children's social and emotional development; and when the child enters primary school, links between home and school will be established.

This and similar projects seeking to increase the nature and extent of active parental involvement, show a high level of awareness of the role which parents can and should play in the education of their children. Perhaps more important, they also show an increased and changing degree of skill in relevant child rearing practices. There is evidence of the involvement of school with home in positive, interacting ways.

This leads inevitably to a change in the relationship between the school and the community which it serves.

The methodology proposed and adopted was both sophisticated and practical; sophisticated, in that the planning was precise and professional; and practical in that the techniques were clearly related to the needs and possibilities of the province, the education system, the teachers and above all the parents themselves. A careful study of basic demographic social characteristics was conducted to aid in the selection of participant communities. Once selected, the community was 'fully familiarised' with the details of the proposed programme. A small, highly professional team was appointed from CIE and at the same time a group of teachers was chosen from among volunteers working in the province. These teachers were in the last resort responsible for the work with the families. However, they were trained, supported and supervised by the CIE team although being part of the local school system. They helped to develop curricula and methods and worked directly with families within their own households.

Detailed records were kept about the target children and their families and about a 'balanced control group' from another area within the province. National measures of educational development were available but in addition, in an attempt to broaden the focus beyond the purely cognitive, 'other factors were examined, necessarily more impressionistically, for example, nutritional patterns and changes, growth of self confidence and competence in the family as a whole, degree of involvement with the formal school' (BvLF, Proposal, 1977a).

In the event the evaluation was sufficiently positive for the programme to be extended not only to other rural areas in the province but also to the urban poor. That is, a systematic effort was made towards horizontal development or, in Foundation language, dissemination. The Foundation continued to be involved in these later developments.

RURAL COMMUNITIES IN COLOMBIA

In the isolated province of Choco on the Pacific coast of Colombia, a project was supported in order to improve the education, health and general environment of children living in four small towns. Most of the high levels of disadvantage in these communities stemmed from their isolation. Because of this they have been accurately described as marginal in

relation to Colombia as a whole. Communication was relatively infrequent and difficult within the area as well as between it and the outside world. Imported goods were expensive and the markets for local products were limited, despite the potential richness of the region. Literacy rates were relatively high among young people but low among their parents and grandparents and particularly among the indigenous Indian people. Employment opportunities were extremely limited.

The project was focused on both parents and their children in an attempt to stimulate intellectual, motor and social development. Information was provided on malaria prevention, elementary hygiene, home nursing, first aid, nutrition, techniques of nutritional food cultivation and so on.

The project was implemented by CINDE (the International Centre for Education and Human Development) working with a group of missionary Roman Catholic sisters and community leaders in the provincial city of Medellin. In its formal request (BvLF, Proposal, 1977b), CINDE suggested four specific objectives, all derived from one major goal which was

> to foster the overall development of young children by improving the environment through an educational model in which families and communities become the main delivery system. To accomplish this there are two related sets of objectives. One deals specifically with the improvement of the environment as it relates to the health, physical and intellectual development of children, the other deals with the preparation of local human resources.

The request went on to say that the project intended to prepare a local group of educational agents to work efficiently with the parents of young children to develop the intellectual and social abilities of the children, improve their health and improve the condition of sanitation; improve the economic conditions of the family so that they can provide the needs of their children; organise community education, health and sanitation services in an integrated fashion; and improve the ability of the people to organise themselves and to solve their own problems.

Emphasis on development

There is no mention here of compensation, the emphasis is entirely on development; ideas and programmes are to arise from the people themselves and are not be externally imposed; concern is with all aspects of development and not specifically with the cognitive or intellectual; the major delivery agency becomes the family and the community – indeed there is no mention of the pre-school as such.

It is fair to suggest that *Proyecto Promesa*, to give the enterprise its official title, helped considerably to crystallise Foundation thinking and activities and it greatly influenced later developments, particularly but not exclusively, in Latin America.

The use of toys

CINDE had invested a great deal of intellectual faith as well as highly professional skill in the development of toys and toy libraries as the key technique for interesting parents and children and, more important, for the stimulation of intellectual development. The core of the Promesa programme in its initial phase was that parents would

> train to use a set of toys especially designed to teach skills that they considered important and skills that society expects of children, recognising colours, shapes, sizes, counting, reading or understanding a story. Using the toys, emphasis was placed on discovery learning, problem solving, and development of logical thinking.

Language improvement in the sense of precision of use as well as vocabulary development was closely linked to the toy-based programme consisting of seminars, workshops, family discussions and individual use of the toys by parents.

Evaluating the project

The evaluation of the project was straightforward and was conducted by CINDE's research services. There were five basic hypotheses:

a) the intellectual abilities of the children will increase as the consequence of home teaching;

b) the general commitment of the adult population to education, and consequently its general level of educational will increase;

c) the condition of the living environment will improve;

d) basic health services through community participation will emerge; and

e) the economic level of participating families will be raised through participation in various production groups.

Here were objectives which could readily be evaluated. Testing instruments were developed and comparisons were made with control groups. There was some evidence to suggest 'that a community-based programme directed at the education of mothers in realising their potential as educators can be as effective as a nursery programme in promoting intellectual development to the child.' More important as an evaluative statement, the project spread. There was demand for it in neighbouring villages and local areas. Health services have been swamped by demands for help and assistance and so on. A Foundation project review in 1980 summarised the effect of the Choco programme as follows (BvLF, Project Report, 1980c):

> The project's major accomplishments have been the training of para-professionals and the development of local grass roots leadership. The project clearly demonstrates the importance of education as an instrument for bringing about the engagement of local population and community development.
>
> The system of training para-professionals, mainly mothers, to become educational agents working through the home, using carefully structured educational materials has been demonstrated to be workable. Children exposed to the system are performing as well as their equivalents in the formal pre-school setting. The impact of the programme in terms of health, hygiene, nutrition, and basic skills in the community organisation is already apparent. The first cadre of local leaders has emerged for training to assume ultimate responsibility for the delivery of the programme.

There was a further phase in which the project continued in Choco and was also taken over by local authorities in other areas and other communities.

HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN ISRAEL

The project in the Negev in southern Israel was a deliberate and conscious endeavour to place emphasis on all aspects of development, to eschew compensation as a method; to be

interactionist rather than interventionist. The project staff argued that they were faced with an Arabic-speaking minority group whose members, like a number of others in Israel, were unable to take advantage of the opportunities in theory available to them.

In general terms Israel has a very good educational system with, in theory, equality of access for all children and all people at every level from school to postgraduate, in both formal and non-formal institutions of a wide variety. There are no real legal barriers to access, yet many children fail to take advantage of the apparent opportunities available to them. The reasons are basically socio-cultural. For example:

> Olakim where the project was developed is ... typical of the new towns established in underdeveloped parts of the country in the early fifties to absorb the mass immigration of Jews from the Islamic world; over 90 per cent of its 11,500 inhabitants originate from the traditional societies of this part of the world: North Africa, Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Kurdistan, India. The town suffers from all the problems which typify these communities in the economic, social and educational spheres. With textiles as the main local industry, available local employment has been primarily unskilled and ill-paid with the resultant out migration of young people. Social stagnation and concomitant reluctance on the part of the trained and educated people to settle in the town is the consequence. This has further exacerbated dependency on outside agencies and experts for the maintenance of the necessary social and educational services which the relatively backward and uneducated population has been ill-equipped to run for itself. Over 50 per cent of the population is under the age of 18; these children and the schools which they attend are classified as 'disadvantaged' by the Ministry of Education. The attenuation of parental authority in traditional norms has further contributed to the parents' sense of powerlessness and impaired self image, when combined with the general cultural impoverishment of the home environment all the conditions for the perpetuation of disadvantage are present (BeLL Project Report, 1980b).

The project staff argued that solution of this problem lay in working directly with the communities rather than in fresh activities in the schools themselves.

> The main thrust of project activities has been in the direction of the prevention of deprivation rather than compensation for its deleterious effects. This means in effect reaching the child by the parent and ensuring that the home – the child's first school – provides better conditions for all his development, emotional social and moral no less than cognitive. Ultimately this leads to development of a comprehensive programme of parent education and guidance (BvLF, Project Report, 1980b).

Involving the community

The techniques were varied and in some instances highly innovative. In particular the thrust was directed towards the community itself and the general improvement of the quality of life of all people. In a real way the education of children was seen as a means to that end, rather than as an end in itself. This may be seen in a statement extracted from the project review report written in 1980.

> The project set itself the task of developing structures which would help the community to decrease its dependence on outside assistance in essential spheres of community life, improve its ability to solve its problems through reliance on its own resources, enhance its members' self-esteem and improve the quality of life in the community. The community's active involvement and participation in the education of its children were chosen as the means of realisation of these objectives. No less the community's (and therefore *ipso facto* the parents') active involvement and participation the overall quality and effective means of improving the overall quality and effectiveness of its children's education and enhancing their life chances.

The methodology towards the attainment of these ends which depended, in the first instance at least, on the well-planned and direct involvement of a highly sophisticated team from the Negev Regional College, had a number of foci which included the integration of existing institutions – schools, kindergartens, health services, well-baby clinics – into a total educational support framework; development of a comprehensive programme of parent education and guidance, including prenatal sessions which stressed techniques of parenting as well as the more strictly medical aspects; programmes for teachers which emphasised not only the importance of the development of the whole child but also the prime value of working with parents; construction of

a highly innovative early childhood curriculum in which the emphasis is on the whole child and his development, emotionally, socially, morally, no less than cognitively; specific community-directed activities beyond the normal reach of existing institutions. These were gradually merged with all other aspects of the project so that eventually 'these objectives shape the project's intervention strategies; participative and supportive rather than directive'.

The review went on:

> The curriculum also takes into account the types of problems encountered by parents in an increasingly complex society and the attempts to provide them with guidelines for coping with the many dilemmas any parent, and especially a young and inexperienced one, must face, encouraging them to develop and rely on their own innate strengths and resources. The core curriculum is flexible and ... thus suited to a variety of setting and audiences.

The project team worked closely with teachers and with professionals in other institutions. They also strongly encouraged and assisted in the selection, training and employment of a group of para-professionals, mainly mothers, as educational counsellors. This was a highly innovative step which has met with a great deal of success.

The value of an integrated model

The 'modest programme' in Otakam (BvLF, Project Report, 1980b) both stimulated and influenced the most important aspects of Foundation thinking at the end of the decade. Certainly it demonstrated one highly successful way in which community-based activities could function in an industrialised society, just as the Choco project had major implications for community work in the developing world. The Foundation's review gave full recognition to the importance of the project as an influence on its own thinking.

> In its relatively short life the project has demonstrated the richness of an integrated model of educational practice. A passive and depressed community with a low self-image and a tradition of dependence on welfare agencies, a social context far from conducive to the productive development of its children is in the process of being transformed into a healthier and more positive educational environment, in which parents confidently play a part and assume

responsibility for their children's education. The exercise is thoroughly thought through and the process well advanced to developing a theoretical model of action in a deprived community.

THE URBAN FRINGE IN SPAIN

In many ways the problems which gave rise to the development of the Ofakim project in Israel were paralleled in a number of areas of Spain. They were the special problems created by the development of new housing estates in or on the edges of large cities. The difficulties and the consequent disadvantage to young children are neatly summarised in the account of the Andalucía project (*Programa Andalucía*) in a Foundation *Newsletter* in 1980:

> Andalucía is a region in southern Spain characterised by very high unemployment ... and rates high on the list of areas in urgent need of special social and educational assistance. The recent growth of urban industry has brought many people from the rural areas into the cities in search of employment. As a result, a number of a new low-cost housing developments have sprung up in and around these major cities. Here young parents find themselves for the first time caring for their children without the advice and support of elder relatives and frequently mothers have to go out to work. In these circumstances existing educational provision of nearly every kind has become insufficient and inadequate. This is particularly true of facilities for children of pre-school age. Spain, like other countries in such a situation, therefore, faces socio-pedagogic problems at this level – problems of concern and not only to parents and educators, but also to sociologists, politicians and economists.

Little in the Andalucía project was new or innovative when looked at on an international scale, but in the Spain of the 1970s many of its activities were highly innovative and exciting and the consequences may well have far-reaching impact.

In the mid-1970s the central problem of providing a good caring environment for young children had found two legal solutions in the country: high-cost nursery school with professional staffing or purely custodial day care. Both were expensive and neither was meeting the demand, let alone the need.

The Fundacion General Mediterranea (FGM), a private philanthropic organisation, concluded after a careful evaluation that since it was legally impossible to establish a low-cost nursery school, the only cost-effective alternative would have to operate within the framework of the *guarderia* (day care centre), which traditionally has had no educational function. It was seen that this could have 'a wide national impact on facilities for pre-school children, since the *guarderia* is by far the most common form of insitutional provision for the age group' (BvLF, Project Report, 1980a).

Three experimental programmes were mounted in or near the cities of Granada, Seville and Cordoba. The professional team set up by FGM consisted of a specialist in pre-school education, a psychologist, a medical doctor, three social workers and the three head teachers of the existing *guarderias* in which the project was to be established. Integration was undertaken by the University of Granada.

Staff selection

The most immediate problems related to staff selection and training, explaining to parents and the community the goals and efforts of the new activities and the development of a curriculum. These tasks clearly had to be initiated and carried out more or less simultaneously. In an act of some courage it was decided that only one 'trained' teacher would be assigned to each centre.

> All other staff would eventually be mothers trained on the job as para-professionals. A careful training programme was worked out for the mothers, but it soon became evident to the team that the professional teachers also needed training for and involvement in developing the idea of innovation as expressed in the project's work. ... Some teachers who had been well trained for pre-school work still felt uncertain when they were not accompanied by a supervisor. This prevented them from working with a clear sense of purpose and in a proper rhythm. However, as they saw the results they achieved with these new methods they gained more confidence. The team were convinced therefore that enough time must be spent in guiding the professionals also in joint consideration of the goals set by the project. (BvLF, Project Report, 1980a)

This once more reinforces the view that unless teachers are well educated in addition to being well trained, they will lack

flexibility and have difficulties with new and unfamiliar situations, especially when there is no direct support.

Curriculum design and development presented its own difficulties, not least because it had to be effectively delivered by para-professionals in association with the very small number of trained teachers who themselves were still feeling their way. The curriculum, in the narrow sense, was centrally designed and hence to some extent was out of control of the project team, let alone the teachers, the para-professionals and the parents. However, the project team hoped that by the use of local materials and examples it would be possible to enrich the laid down curriculum and to make it 'more relevant' to the para-professionals and to the children. Some ingenious techniques to assist in this endeavour were introduced. For example, in the first year the para-professionals worked with a particular age range of children, while in the second year of operation, as individual areas of competence emerged, each para-professional worked exclusively in one of the four principal curricular areas.

This use of what amounts to team teaching at the pre-school level was reinforced by development of a thematic approach. Each theme was developed over a 15-day period. The initial activities relating to a theme were carried out in groups directed primarily at familiarising the children with aspects of their environment. 'At fortnightly intervals planning meetings were held with parents to discuss the curricular theme to be developed next. Parents volunteered to accompany the children on the necessary visits or help with the collection and construction of materials.' Not only was this to affect the curriculum in a major way, it was also a most interesting and useful technique for involving parents and the community in a positive fashion in the activities of the school. In addition, various workshops and seminars were held for parents to help prepare educational materials and provide various support activities. The centres themselves became rallying points for the neighbourhood and in some ways led to a broader based education for all adults within the communities.

Interaction rather than intervention

It is reasonable to suggest that in Andalucia the emphasis was on development and not on compensation, despite the centrally determined curriculum in the four traditional areas. Although the centre of the project was the institution, the target group was plainly the school, plus the parents, plus the

community. There was a strong indication of interaction with community and parents rather than of the intervention model with which the project apparently began. Equally, there was evident growing concern with the child as a person and not with the child in custodial care or the child as a pupil.

The final paragraph of the review report summary is well justified:

> The Andalucía experiment yielded several important conclusions on possibilities for staffing day care centres with local community people, particularly mothers. The implications for teacher training policy are especially significant.

SEMINAR: SUSTAINING CHANGE

A further development in Foundation thinking emerged during the fourth seminar, held in Malaysia in 1977. At the time there were only three Foundation-supported ECE projects in operation in the whole of Asia and Oceania. The opportunity was therefore seized to invite as many people as possible from Foundation projects in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe and to ask people to come from Asian countries in which the Foundation was not then working. Representatives of UNESCO and UNICEF, as the two United Nations organisations most concerned with young children, were also invited. In all, participants came from 17 different countries.

Personnel were as diverse in qualifications, institutional affiliations and interests as were the countries from which they came. There were early childhood education project workers, community-based educators, curriculum experts, teacher trainers, academic evaluators and theorists – senior professors, and education department administrators as well as relatively junior teachers and their aides. They worked across the entire range of localities, in all regions of the world and with all types of target groups. The Foundation in truth was displaying its wares and resources across the entire gamut of the countries in which it was working.

The theme chosen was 'Sustainability of Change in Education', while still attempting to fix early childhood education as the major target preoccupation. The basic theme was selected because of the difficulty which innovative programmes often have in becoming adapted and integrated into the existing educational mainstream.

At the theoretical level, in terms of the development of the Foundation policy, perhaps the greatest gain was a set of insights of two distinct kinds: first, of the relationship between early childhood education and the total formal system and second, the development of already burgeoning ideas about total community educational programmes. There were extensions of the notions, tentative in Jerusalem and firmly advanced in Curaçao, about wider, interdisciplinary, community-based programmes.

Contributing to national goals

Seminar participants spent a good deal of time examining ways in which early childhood education can contribute to the attainment of the kind of national goals being expressed in most developing as well as developed countries. The report (BvLF, 1978a) is worth quoting at some length:

> Implicit in efforts to launch special intervention programmes in this section of education is the assumption that special preparation for the disadvantaged child for entry into the formal school will lead to greater academic and economic success; the cycle will thus be broken whereby such children enter the system from a disadvantaged position and end, for the most part, as 'drop-outs'.
>
> Great care should be taken, however, not to overemphasise the artificial, seemingly academic activities in early childhood education programmes. Concepts must precede factual knowledge and should therefore be introduced in a free, creative atmosphere. This fundamental fact still requires acceptance in several contexts in the region, both by administrators and decision-makers anxious for early pay-off, and perhaps more complexly, by parents and the community at large. In the latter connection, the region poses particular problems. Where parents and communities may not themselves have a particularly high level of formal schooling, or indeed in many instances none at all, the aims and objectives of modern school systems may be very unfamiliar to them and thus community understanding and acceptance of progressive change must be promoted so that it can go ahead hand in hand with innovation in school curriculum and methods. This implies that changes in the formal school system should as far as possible be linked to the evolution of the traditional culture of the society so that the rift between the two does not become too great.

Project evaluation

One new, additional topic was introduced at this seminar – that of project evaluation. Over the years there had been (and continues to be) a great deal of discussion of this very difficult problem at Foundation headquarters, within projects and in informal ways at earlier seminars. However, in Malaysia there was a determined effort to get to grips with the problem in a significant way. Free and open discussion between the expert evaluators and the field practitioners resulted in the development of some useful and worthwhile ideas. To quote once more from the seminar report:

> In early childhood education, most programmes are highly culture-specific and even within one society there are dangers in over-hasty transposition. The detached evaluation team should thus also be concerned with defining the relevance of experimental programmes to varying contexts.

That is, evaluation, like programmes and projects themselves, must be related to the needs of the specific community.

The second major point made related to the need to combine the skills of the professional evaluator with those of the teacher in the classroom:

> Comprehensive evaluation of experimental programmes in early childhood education, as in other areas of educational innovation, needs a wide variety of supportive evidence, both 'hard' and 'soft', i.e., both quantitative and descriptive. ... Non-formal evaluative action also occurs – among politicians and administrators, among field workers at community level and even among the children themselves. These latter retain the ultimate 'summative' judgement, i.e. by dropping out. All these sections of the community have important, and frequently very sensitive, contributions to make to the overall task of evaluation and represent a source of information that should be capitalised upon. ... At the same time, it would be unwise to dismiss properly conducted research and evaluation in oversimplistic terms.

SEMINAR: PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A second seminar during the period, in Cali, Colombia in 1979, saw a focus on the fundamental problem of 'Parent and Community Involvement in Early Childhood Education'.

Some 25 participants were invited; in the main these were senior educators, project directors and academics from the

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1979a):

> A more useful model is an educational one. Starting from where people are it aims constructively to help them to reach appropriate goals; the stress is on habilitation rather than rehabilitation, on favourable and self-determined change rather than a cure of some supposed disease or remedy of some deficiency.

The whole question of the dilemma of choice between a broad, developmentally based education system and the narrow one stressing behavioural objectives related to the immediate needs of society, came in for a great deal of argument and comment. While the broad approach has much to be said for it, parents and communities and more particularly government officials and politicians, are able to understand and to advocate approaches which will result in more specific achievements and attainments related to the immediate needs of the school and of the society.

Link between school and community

There was an interesting and refreshing series of comments on the notion of the link between the school and the community. For once it was not taken for granted that this is necessarily and always a good thing. Some preconditions may be essential.

> Given the present gap in attitudes, the desirable union between school and community may not, in the immediate short term be realisable. Equally, looking at the problem from the side of those parents, who have often themselves failed in the school, it cannot be expected that they will have much affection for it or be ready to cooperate. But there is a paradox. Among marginal groups of parents there exists a strong interest that their children should make the best possible use of the school. Formal schooling is seen as a life line, the only way for their children to move upwards out of their present circumstances.

In some ways the Cali seminar anticipated the new directions, the restated philosophies of the Foundation which were to find expression in the later policies for the 1980s. There was emphasis on the whole child rather than the child as a pupil and on the need for working with the community in terms of interaction rather than intervention. There was support for the view that work with mothers and with young children must start as early as possible; pre-school may be too late. There was continued support for the traditional bases of

Foundation programmes: teacher education, endogenous curriculum development, use of para-professionals.

The seeds of change

Until the late 1970s the theoretical justification for parent involvement was as a rule in socio-economic or political terms, rather than being based on psychological or cultural considerations. The objective of the poverty programme was to 'integrate the poor into the mainstream of economic and political life' and Project Head Start was conceived as a critical aspect of the poverty programme. That is, it was not, in its origins at least, concerned with child development in the broad sense. Hence parent involvement when it did occur was defined in terms of parent education, parent participation and parent control. There was little recognition of the role of the parent as educator, let alone of the influence of the home on learning styles, on attitudes to school or on values. There was also an assumption that the school was essentially a sound institution which met the demands of society and the needs of most children more than adequately. The need was to prepare the disadvantaged child better to take advantage of these excellent facilities. Even the involvement of parents was seen in this light. Thus such a distinguished educator and psychologist as Urie Bronfenbrenner (1974) could write: 'the evidence indicates further that the involvement of the child's family as an active participant [in the pre-school] is critical to the success of any *intervention programme*' (emphasis added), and Woodhead (1985) claims that this statement 'has been widely assimilated into pre-school thinking'.

Similar considerations pertained with reference to the relationship between the schools and the immediate community. Certainly there was some lip service to the need to involve the community as a whole as well as the parents in the education of disadvantaged children and the mere assertion of the necessity for this involvement was some recognition that the school is part of that community, but the impetus remained external to that community. The school, in a real sense, was imposed by the larger society, and the local community, like the parents and children, was expected to learn to adapt to its demands. This philosophy carried over into the new programmes and even in societies such as the United States and Britain where the local community has financial and legal responsibility for the schools, there was little attempt to change community and school together to help alter the pattern of disadvantage.

By the mid-1970s however, research in Western systems, the arguments of educators supported by data from psychologists, anthropologists and sociologists and, above all, the evidence rapidly accumulated in developing societies, pointed inexorably to the same conclusions: that unless families and communities were actively involved in the design and conduct of programmes to alleviate or prevent disadvantage, the outcomes were at best transitory. Moreover, it was not only a matter of support or reinforcement for the work in schools or even for that directed at children. Programmes designed to improve the quality of life of parents and communities were more likely to achieve the objectives for children than programmes limited to the school.

Before the end of the decade the Foundation had begun to examine its own theoretical bases, its own objectives in order clearly to define the principles to be applied in approving and supporting grants in future years. The seeds of the new principles had appeared much earlier, but by 1980 it was time to examine the assumptions and to state them clearly and precisely.

Until the beginning of the 1980s, there had really never been a coherent statement of policy for the Foundation other than that embodied in the Statutes. Partly to remedy this, and partly to develop guidelines for the future, in February 1980 the Trustees asked the Executive Director to prepare a long-term plan concerning the Foundation's activities for the next ten years.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COHERENT STATEMENT

A tightly argued preliminary paper (BvLF, Policy, 1980a) was presented the following May. During the next 12 months this document was actively discussed both formally and informally by the Trustees and also by the senior staff. A commentary, *Roadmarks for the Eighties* (BvLF, Policy, 1980c), was written by the then Chairman, Oscar van Leer, and detailed views on this were solicited from the Executive Director's consultants. Out of this hive of activity came a draft document: *The Programme for the Eighties: The outcome of a dialogue* (BvLF, Policy, 1981), which was available to the Trustees in May 1981. This lengthy paper was followed by a series of supplementary documents, culminating in a definitive statement on priorities and procedures (BvLF, Policy, 1982a) which sought 'to clarify how the guidance given by the Trustees and the priorities they have set will be expressed in the development of a meaningful effective programme'.

This set of proposals was accepted by the Trustees with minor modification and later extended by a series of technical papers on financing, and on 'cluster themes', and from these was derived a number of programme prospects on which the Trustees were asked to express opinions.

The entire exercise was a genuine, major and generally successful effort to assess the Foundation's activities, to determine whether the policy had been a fruitful way of approaching the fundamental objective, which in itself was not in question, and whether redefinition and redeployment of resources should be essayed.

The preliminary paper

The preliminary paper, called *Long Term Planning: The next ten years* (BvLF, Policy, 1980a), began with a forthright claim that it 'represented a first attempt to describe in perspective the role and development of the Foundation in the eighties.'

Following a brief review of the administrative and financial arrangements made in the 1960s, the Executive Director and his senior staff then went on to outline what they believed to have been the significant programme trends based on an analysis of 'current and major projects'.

> [There is] a series of interlinking basic notions – that the early years are significant; that the family as prime educator needs support to cope with change; that change must also be brought about in schools; that communities in a period of intensive social change also need reinforcing to generate the will, the skills and the mental and emotional structures in order to survive in these times and in particular to confront and outface the disruptive social forces, educational and otherwise, impinging upon them. The quintessential 'state of the art' is reflected in the Foundation's efforts, through various instruments and combinations of instruments, to render individuals and communities autonomous, that is the real decolonisation of the masses, an objective valid in all countries and cultures.

A statement of this character could certainly not have been made by any aid or philanthropic organisation in the mid-sixties. In particular, apart from a few voices crying in the intellectual and academic wilderness, the contentions about family and, even more, community, were no more than theoretical propositions, far beyond operational proposals. It is much to the Foundation's credit indeed that in one or two projects even in the late sixties, there were clear signs of such concerns and by the end of the seventies, the general statement was more than warranted.

In more specific terms the document suggested that there had been five somewhat overlapping areas of operational concern. These were:

a) special problems of ethnic minorities;
b) educational problems of depressed inner city areas;
c) building competence in the teacher on the job;
d) education in less developed, mainly rural areas; and
e) the interface between education and employment.

The challenge of the eighties

The paper went on to pose 'the challenge of the eighties', beginning with some philosophical reflections on the state of the world as it might affect Foundation policy. It touched on vital issues such as: population pressure; world health; extension of life expectation; increasing social and economic aspiration and accompanying demand for better living conditions; the use and misuse of materials; the threat of disaster; and went on to assert that

> in a very real way, education in its very modest and most fundamental sense is the only instrument available for preparing people to meet the threats, anxieties and tensions inherent in change and, by understanding, context them and change itself. More and more clearly there is a realisation that education is, or should be, a very wide concept of which schooling is only a part. Where schools or educational institutions are broadly in sympathy with the community and its values, then formal education can be a very potent support, fitting individuals into a cultural consensus. Mostly this is not the case. Externally caused changes challenge even intact and coherent communities.

This was strong stuff and led to a carefully balanced discussion about the nature and purposes of education leading to a more detailed consideration of the meaning of all this for Foundation policy. The conclusions helped in no small way to determine the decisions of the Trustees and these in turn have led to new policies which have had a profound influence on the lives and welfare of millions of children and their families.

A holistic approach

The document was considered at length by the Trustees and the Executive Director was invited to prepare more detailed information on some aspects of it. This was called: *What Have We Learned? Seven questions for the eighties.* After restating the inadequacies of the original programmes based on Head Start, the paper (BvLF, Policy, 1980b) asserted that:

> The Foundation, for its part, through its variety of experimental projects in diverse cultural settings, found out, perhaps more clearly and certainly more quickly than other similar programmes, that special pre-school facilities and curricula are not in themselves enough to offset the negative effects of a deficient environment. It proved essential that children be seen in their total environment, an environment which itself is constantly changing. The

centre of this 'ecological approach' is the family. From the initial notion of selective, one-dimensional intervention, there progressively emerged the concept of a broad-based intervention to develop a coherent, socially minded, cost-effective policy for early childhood care and education.

The analysis led to the assertion that a 'holistic' approach to development of deprived communities became necessary. This statement was followed by a long list of propositions or theses which, it was claimed, 'have led the Foundation to contribute in a variety of ways to novel and far reaching initiatives to arrive at a widely accepted integrated mode of early childhood care and education'.

Before asking the seven specific questions, the Executive Director posed one of the major dilemmas facing BvLF, a dilemma which pervades the writing in this book as well as in the documents under review. Is it possible to impose or even work within the confines of a rigorous model for projects – and at the same time work closely with a community in order to find out its needs, its beliefs, its wants, its own preferred ways of working? A concern was that attempting to harden the various components of the Foundation's experience into 'model' form 'inevitably leads to a loss of the particular awareness, of the sensitivity to individual situations which is crucial to the style. ... It is the stress on the ... productive interplay between education and community which typifies so many Foundation projects, which gives them their uniqueness and which represents a challenge for the future.' It is clear from the very posing of the dilemma, where the Executive Director's sympathies and those of his senior staff lay.

The seven questions

The seven questions related directly and specifically to policy and to structure, rather than to methodology. The first asked whether the three different approaches used by the Foundation – early childhood education, integrated education for development and intervention and adolescence – should be maintained or whether further areas of intervention should be explored. In a similar vein, the second question noted that while there were still many aspects of early childhood education to be further explored, the Foundation experience was ripe for further generation and multiplication, and asked whether such multiplication should have priority, including intervention in non van Leer countries. The third question asked whether, given its now extensive experience, the Foundation should engage in

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research contracts to help conceptualise the evidence and data required. The fourth question asked whether the existing operational model – usually six years of project funding, intensive intellectual and technical involvement, the network interaction processes and the inherent assessment and multiplication components – should be continued, and if not, whether the major aspects of change should include, for example, an increase of smaller seed money grants to launch new ideas or the Foundation undertaking the establishment and operation of an entity engaged in on-going work in its chosen domain. Related to this was a question about encouraging a process of devolution and decentralisation through the establishment of regional resource and dissemination centres. The remaining two questions dealt with financial and staffing matters.

After further debate and discussion between the Trustees and the Executive Director and his staff, the definitive document – *The Programme for the Eighties: The outcome of a dialogue* (BvLF, Policy, 1981) – was prepared and presented in May 1981. It was intended, like its predecessor, to review accomplishments and lead to a set of guidelines for future programming.

CONCENTRATING ON THE EARLY YEARS

For the greater part this represented an agreement on the major recommendations of the preliminary paper, together with some policy answers to the seven questions. From the point of view of this book the vital statement was that *'effort will be concentrated on the child from birth to seven, and on developing the educational resources of the community surrounding him [or her]'*. The Trustees had become convinced in the course of the dialogue that purely school-based projects were unlikely to have the desired outcomes for disadvantaged children. This is a major statement by any standard. It is the most forthright assertion of policy yet made by an international or even a national organisation. It is at once acceptance of a belief that education is the key, and that school alone cannot solve the problems of disadvantage, and an assertion that it is possible to change the inadequate background of disadvantaged children by positive action. It is a major theoretical statement derived as much from field experience as from experiment.

The upshot of this dialogue was a new and plain statement of policy which represents what has been the firm policy of BvLF since its acceptance by the Trustees in 1981.

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The mission of the Foundation remains what it has been since the sixties – the realisation of human potential among depressed, disadvantaged and deprived groups. Within this broad mission, the experience discussed above provides a number of specific pointers to guide the policy of the Foundation in the 1980s. The concentration is upon the developing human being and the field of action is education in its broadest sense.

Experimental practice and research findings indicate the importance of intervention in 'sensitive' periods. Both for the young themselves and for those around them, the early years up to seven and the period of adolescence seem the most likely to yield the best results. Restrictions on finance in the immediate years ahead make it necessary for the Foundation to concentrate its efforts on the period from birth to seven. Existing resources of expertise and manpower also dictate greater concentration and deepening of focus. However, accumulated knowledge and experience with projects in adolescence and more particularly with the early school leaver should remain part of the intellectual stock of the Foundation and be made available where required.

With the pre-school child and his [or her] needs as a focus and his [or her] optimal development as the aim, action should deal with a series of widening concentric circles: the care giver, the family, the micro-community and the macro-community involving, on the way, all the other 'agents' – adults, adolescents, professionals from many disciplines – in a network to surround the young child with a coherent educative community.

If such a community is to come into existence, its awareness of its responsibility for the education of children and its capacity to discharge it must be restored. This implies fundamental changes in major aspects of professional roles, particularly though not exclusively those of educators. It implies work with people rather than for people, aimed at 'habilitation' and autonomy rather than dependence; skill and knowledge transfer rather than manipulation by guarding professional mysteries. It implies a deliberate, conscious and sustained effort to use and integrate all the human resources of the community through active participation and by the development of all kinds of para-professional activities.

It also implies developing through participatory learning, the resources of leadership, trained ability and involvement necessary to sustain learning and to digest change with the essential minimum of outside input. The first step along this path is that the Foundation's intervention is seen to be successful in that it is not rejected by the local culture but yet remains sufficiently unassimilated to continue to initiate and to sustain processes of change.

Apart from the objective itself, these paragraphs, particularly that beginning 'with the pre-school child and his [or her] needs as a focus' are far from the original Statutes' statements. They accept and proclaim rather than imply the directions of development analysed earlier. In order to enhance the development of the child, it is essential to take into account and work with all the social forces which affect that development.

The new Programme for the Eighties did not in fact wait until all the pieces were in place before implementation began. Once the basic proposals in the dialogue had been accepted the staff informed relevant persons and institutions of the new policy, particularly as it related to young children, and developed a relevant set of priorities and procedures.

A slight pause

Towards the end of 1980, the Trustees decided that during 1981 and 1982 the number of grants would be greatly restricted. They would be confined essentially to funding of second phase activities of projects which had made good use of an original grant which was coming to its end in 1980 or in 1981 and had submitted proposals for continuation, or to worthwhile project proposals which had been deferred during 1980.

The majority of the 22 grants made during the 1981-1982 pause fell into the first of these categories. In consequence there was little evidence of major change in direction or of major growth as Table 6 indicates. It is true that there was some continuation of the shift away from the pure pre-school. In this context, a number of projects which had concentrated on institutional activities in their first phase moved in their second phase to greater involvement with parents and the community. There was a minor growth in the proportion of grants to rural areas at the expense of mixed localities and a significant rise (despite the small numbers), in growth to

projects in OECD countries, probably as a consequence of the concentration on the second phase projects.

There was a deliberate pause both in the total amount granted in each year and the number of projects funded. Moreover, apart from the effects of the pause, all statistics refer to two years of funding only whereas all other periods were quadrennia. There are, however, some aspects of considerable interest to the general theme to be noted in some of the projects. Two of them in particular warrant examination, as each, in highly different ways, was highly innovative and looked forward to the initiatives of the eighties. One was a comparative failure, the other something of a success.

COMMUNITY PROJECT IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

In the district of Malalaua, in the Gulf Province of Papua New Guinea, most of the adults were illiterate, only one or two generations away from headhunting. They spoke a number of local languages and dialects which were totally different from the national language and were, to a great extent, mutually incomprehensible from village to village. Knowledge of nutrition, of the basic causes of illness – which was attributed to sorcery – of efficient techniques of farming, of sanitation, of a money economy, of the education system available to the children – all were abysmally low. Malnutrition rates were high, although it was relatively easy to produce plentiful food; malaria was endemic and resistant to prophylactic drugs; intestinal parasites of many varieties were universal; death in childbirth for mother and infant was common, and so on. The village schools were no more than bamboo huts, open to wind and weather (and this was monsoon country), with dirt floors, few desks, little or no equipment. Teachers were dedicated and hard working, but were, in the main, ill-educated and poorly trained. The language of instruction was English. To talk of compensatory pre-school education in such a context was as meaningless as it was foolish. Any strategy to improve the life, even to increase the chances for survival, of young children had to be based on work with and for the total community.

A careful feasibility study had been conducted throughout Papua New Guinea by the Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Foundation in order to identify one or two village areas of great disadvantage in which projects could be established. In the event two were selected, one to be assisted by UNICEF and the other, that at Malalaua, by the

Table 6: Grants and No. of ECE/ECCE Projects by Region, by Location Within Country, by Target Group, and by Type of Institution – 1981-1982 (in 000s of adjusted guilders to 1965 base)

	ECE GRANTS IN ADJUSTED GUILDERS (000S)	AVERAGE VALUE OF GRANT	GRANTS AS % OF TOTAL ECE GRANTS	NUMBER OF ECE PROJECTS
TOTALS FOR THE PERIOD	4764.0	216.5	100.0	22
REGIONS				
Latin America Caribbean	673.6	224.5	14.1	3
Asia & Oceania (incl. Australia)	306.4	306.4	6.4	1
Africa	463.9	232.0	9.7	2
Europe & Others (incl. US & Israel)	3320.1	207.5	69.7	16
International (more than 1 country)				
LOCATION WITHIN COUNTRY				
Urban	2697.0	192.6	56.6	14
Rural	1268.1	253.6	26.6	5
Mixed	799.1	266.4	16.8	3
TARGET GROUPS				
Pre-schools	1083.3	154.8	22.7	7
Pre-school + parents	1379.9	230.0	29.0	6
Pre-School + parents + community	1104.0	220.8	23.2	5
Community	1197.0	299.3	25.1	4
TYPE OF INSTITUTION				
Universities	1602.7	160.3	33.6	10
Governments	1934.0	241.8	40.6	8
Voluntary organisations	1227.4	306.9	25.8	4

Foundation. The project was also supported by the national Ministry of Education which applied formally for a grant. These funds were financially administered by the Superintendent of Non-formal Education who was also in a loose way responsible for the project, despite being separated from it by great distance and time of travel. His day to day

availability to the project, despite his best efforts, was minimal.

It had been decided moreover, that from the beginning the project should be entirely conducted at village level. All staff – including a project leader who would be an educator, an agriculturist, a maternal and child health care officer and a community developer/appropriate technologist – were to be Papua New Guineans, seconded from the appropriate provincial or district offices in the Gulf Province, and would receive salaries at the same level as their counterparts within the local administration. That is to say, no efforts would be made to recruit highly skilled, well-trained consultants or national officers, even if these had been available.

The objectives were far from the traditional pre-school-based project. Instead, the project sought (BvLF, Proposal, 1982):

> to develop a wide range of educational programmes for parents and children to bring about their attitude change and help villagers analyse, identify and mobilise their own resources for the continuing improvement, general health and well-being of their young children. The child-oriented intervention focuses on promoting the people's own understanding of their children's problems within deprived rural communities.

Although the general aims were laid down by the original project proposal, translation of these into specific objectives for each of the major components of the project were to take place in the Gulf in Malalaua and in the villages. However no specific mechanisms were suggested for this and in practice the objectives became the reduction of the incidence of malnutrition; the development of programmes to change social attitudes which will result in a continuing improvement in the general health of children in the area; and extension of the findings and procedures developed in Malalaua to other parts of the province and elsewhere in Papua New Guinea (BvLF, Letter, 1981).

At a later stage the national Education Ministry wrote to Malalaua suggesting that additional aims be added. These were the development of a strong community appreciation of the importance of feeding nutritious foods to pregnant mothers and small children; the use of all available community institutions in the identification, production and

distribution of such food; and the identification and prevention of social practices which operate against the welfare of mothers and young children.

As the project evaluator later remarked (BvLF, Project Report, 1986b):

> These aims in effect add to the stated Letter of Grant proposal in that they include those identified by the target populations of the project. They did however lose sight of the intention to develop educational models that in proving successful might be used elsewhere throughout the country.

Specific activities

The basic plan had five components for implementation: activities related to planning, administration, organisation and dissemination of results; staff development training; activities at the vocational centre at Malalaua; activities at centres in villages; and related project evaluation.

Plans for specific activities were developed related to each of these five components. The basic technique was to consist of workshops, particularly in health and nutrition and other village extension programs; specific training programmes for district field officers other than the project staff; and the production of materials for field development work. In the village areas, project field staff were to spend most of their time in demonstration of techniques, cultivation of gardens, child care, and health food preparation in the villages. They were to develop curriculum materials and distribute these and where possible also introduce low-cost technology. These were daunting tasks even for highly trained personnel.

It is beyond the purpose of this account to describe in any detail how the project operated in the field. In fact, the Malalaua project went sadly astray. To quote again the evaluator's report:

> Without doubt all the obstacles should have been foreseen and taken into consideration by those responsible for project design and plan revision. The lack of qualified experience and above all reliable staff is a major problem in many provinces in Papua New Guinea. It is particularly acute in the Gulf. It means that while the principle of employing only national staff on the project must be

> applauded, consideration should have been given to the appointment of alternative managerial staff at the level of project coordinator.

In fact, strong recommendations to this effect were made by the Foundation and the national government, but it proved impossible to recruit a suitable person. What did the Foundation learn from all this? Clearly enough as the evaluator said:

> The intention to employ national staff was sound and in accordance with not only government localisation policy, but also in line with the general theory of community development. The intention to take staff from their various specialist divisions and employ them in an independently resourced project seemed at the time an effective way of working towards integrated community development. Unfortunately the real opportunity was not seized because of lack of good leadership.

It should perhaps be added that part of the project was a considerable success. This was the workshop programme related to prevention of malnutrition. Women enthusiastically attended the workshops and inspection of their subsequent activities suggested that they had learned a great deal which they were putting to good practice. To sum up, it would seem that the Malalaua project, bold in concept and imaginative though it was, in some ways underlines the notion that there are occasions when professional assistance is a necessity even if it raises considerable administrative difficulties.

MORASHA IN ISRAEL

The second project to be described for this period tells a different story. Although funded in 1982, the project in Morasha, a depressed suburb of Ramat Hasharon in Israel, was the first of the new wave of activities to be supported under the programme for the eighties' guidelines.

Morasha itself was built in the 1950s specifically to house immigrants from Morocco, Iraq and the Yemen who had been temporarily living in transit camps. Morasha thus fell into the general category of a housing development with all the attendant dangers of disadvantage which have been discussed in relation to earlier projects and to which so many Foundation grants have been made. There was the additional major disadvantage imposed by migrant status with all its attendant linguistic, cultural and social problems. The official

proposal to the Trustees (BvLF, Proposal, 1981b) summarised the position neatly:

> As the immigrants settled into Morasha, there gradually emerged social and structural problems characteristic of a depressed, minority community: overcrowded housing, delinquency, children unprepared for formal schooling, low levels of adult education. Social services remained underdeveloped, and the proximity of Morasha to neighbourhoods whose development is far more rapid, and services superior, have added to the local peoples' feelings of deprivation and neglect.

BvLF was approached by the Dutch coordinating committee of the Jewish Agency's Project Renewal, set up to support projects in depressed urban areas in Israel. In Morasha it was felt that the Foundation could well bring its experience and expertise to bear in development of the project with the young child as 'focus which would endeavour to strengthen parents', and particularly mothers', understanding of their children's behaviour, and their ability to cope with problems involving the children's education; to develop self-sustaining leadership among local parents so that they could assume a new responsibility in early childhood education and in their community; to coordinate and integrate existing educational programmes for young children, and adapt them to the particular cultural needs of the migrant community; and to evaluate and systematise programme experience with a view to its eventual dissemination (BvLF, Proposal, 1981b).

In the Morasha case, the sponsors contended that although government agencies had been active in attempting to prevent disadvantage and provide proper services for people and all children, 'the new education and social services, largely for working mothers and children aged three to six, remained underutilised. An unsynchronised mix of services had been thrust upon a passive population, often increasing its sense of dependency and its own incapacity' (BvLF, Proposal, 1981b).

The child in the family

The programme had been one of intervention, one of the hand-out, rather than one of interaction with the needs of the community. Moreover it was claimed that young mothers of children in the zero to three age range were inadequately provided for, even within the available social and educational services provided. The proposed emphasis, evident in the overall objective, was to be on the child in the family. The

techniques, which owed much to earlier experience, included the establishment of neighbourhood creches, with local mothers trained as para-professionals as the operators; home visiting programmes by professionals; development of leadership potential among the local population; development and modification of existing learning resources reflecting the cultural context of the community; and retraining of professionals who had been trained in traditional ways for work in kindergartens (BvLF, Proposal, 1981b).

It was hoped that by the end of an experimental period of four years some 1,400 children, zero to six years, and their families, would have been integrated into educational or creche services.

Consultative programmes for building up the skills and knowledge of project teams were provided by the earlier activities, particularly in teacher education, curriculum development and delivery, the training and use of para-professionals and the like. Ben Gurion University, which had evaluated the Ofakim project (see chapter 5), was again involved but a new dimension was added in that the evaluator was incorporated into the project team from the beginning in order to ensure formative as well as summative evaluation of the project. There were two levels of evaluation here: first, in each major programme aspect key indicators of change and relationships were looked at. At the second level there was an analysis of the way in which all the projects' components fitted together to serve the overall project goals. High level local professional advice and skill were thus available at every stage to the project and its staff, a luxury not on tap in Malalaua!

In a sense there was nothing particularly new or innovative in all this, except that the redefinition of the specific objects in the eighties' programme enabled greater precision of targeting the disadvantaged population. It was suggested earlier that a major feature of the eighties' plans implied that, particularly in industrialised countries, there would be a narrowing, a greater precision and defining of the target groups and hence of the appropriate methodologies for reaching them and working with them. The Morasha project was the first evidence of this in operation.

SEMINAR: INTEGRATED AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The only seminar held during this period, in Zimbabwe in 1981, strongly reinforced the policy developments which were occurring. After consultation with the Zimbabwe Government, the topic chosen was 'Integrated and Early Childhood Education: Preparation for Social Development'.

The Government had just released a policy paper entitled *Growth with Equity* and many of the themes of this influential document were highly relevant to the Foundation meeting. Participants were invited from Foundation projects in a number of African countries, Europe, the United States, Israel, Latin America, Malaysia, Australia and Papua New Guinea. There were also international observers from UNESCO, UNICEF, the World ORT Union, the Gulbenkian Foundation, the Organisation of African Unity and the International Development and Research Centre in Latin America. Also present were senior representatives of the Government, led by the Minister of Education herself, teachers and staff of the University of Zimbabwe, including the Vice Chancellor. There were 31 participants and between 30 and 40 observers.

Projects in rural areas

In his opening address, the President of Zimbabwe, the Reverend Canaan Banana, struck an exciting note. He stressed passionately the need for projects in rural areas. Indeed he threw out as a challenge to the Foundation itself (BvLF, 1981),

> the need to set up kindergarten centres in the rural areas. It is in the rural areas that the majority of our people live and where underdevelopment, poverty and malnutrition are rampant. Accordingly, our rural people should have access to social facilities enjoyed by their urban counterparts. Only then can we achieve equal development between sectors, social groups and regional centres. This is the challenge I leave with the participants in this important seminar.

The seminar took up the challenge enthusiastically. There were sufficient people among the participants, both from the African region itself and from Asia and Latin America, who were so closely involved in work in village and other rural communities as to be able to present practical, immediate examples of difficulties and problems faced by children in such areas.

The participants faced up to and discussed the great dilemma of most developing countries: how to preserve and develop the best in traditional culture while at the same time providing opportunities for change to meet the new demands of what was called 'technocratic' society. There was a very frank and open debate on the constraints imposed by malnutrition, infection, maternal deprivation, child deprivation, inadequate mothering and so on. The point was not so much made as hammered home, that the task is not necessarily primarily medical, educational or structural: it may mean providing clean water or adequate food resources or all of these things. In many rural areas of the Third World, to direct effective services to the child necessitates the development of the community as a whole, so as to produce an environment where each child is enabled to develop to its full potential. Much of the interchange centred round how to bring this about.

There was agreement that an ECCE programme may assist community development, in that it may be both a response to a community need and a strategy for community development because it helps the community to identify aspects of its total environment which influence the development of the child and the child's family. There was also much talk of the need for low-cost alternative programmes and insistence that any projects related to improving the quality of the life of the child must focus strongly on integrated education and on liberation of women in society. This was a new note in Foundation seminar discussions.

It has frequently been asserted that one method of reducing costs of pre-school programmes in some societies is to set up home-based early childhood activities. Apart from questioning the dubious validity of this claim, which rests heavily on Western analyses of relative costs of buildings, the participants brought out some of the immensely difficult cultural issues related to home-based programmes. For example, in addition to issues related to working mothers, an important dimension to be considered in home-based programmes is the extent to which parents are willing to modify their own child rearing practices so as to include new kinds of educational activities which foster school readiness skills in children.

A total approach

There was also considerable discussion on methods of development of community activities within the framework of an early childhood educational programme and, in particular, how to do this in order to improve nutrition, health and sanitation. Over and over again the seminar stressed the need for a total approach to the c mmunity as a whole and the child as a whole person. In thi context many of the participants affirmed the problems faced by undertrained and undereducated teachers working within the school and within the community. The point was strongly made that teacher education institutions in developing countries are frequently among the most conservative of agencies. There must be attempts to change attitudes as well as methods and techniques.

Inevitably there was much argument about evaluation and a series of statements were made which have helped to clarify Foundation thinking about the kind of evaluation it may ask for and expect from its projects. The view was taken that evaluation has suffered much from obscurantism engendered by methods which are all too often inappropriate and over-elaborate and by analyses which depend heavily on a high degree of skill and the use of unnecessary and rarified statistical techniques. Mothers, given a little training in reporting methods, are often better recorders of the development of their children than are skilled medical or psychological personnel. Evaluation in this view should be seen as part of the total process and not as an exercise undertaken for its own sake.

The Zimbabwe seminar underlined strongly the project policy being emphasised by the Foundation: the need to set up projects within the community and within the family, particularly in rural areas in the Third World; the importance of looking at the child as a whole and not merely as a pupil because this not only offsets the effects of possible disadvantage but also helps to attack many of the problems of health and nutrition which act as impairments; the importance of teacher training, pre-service and in-service, to work with families and communities as well as with children in school; the value of para-professionals, especially in particular societies in which school systems have not been fully developed; the importance of project centred evaluation as a means of ongoing improvement of procedures. The seminar report ends on an affirmation that 'educational

strategies, employed by men and women of goodwill, faith and courage, *can* help to solve the world's difficulties: that good educational practice can lead to the equitable society'.

In 1985 a paper, *The Main Activity* (BvLF, Policy, 1985), was written after a year's experience of the new policy and the accompanying procedures. It attempted the first serious evaluation of the outcomes. The document recommended that the eighties' statement on concentration on children aged zero to seven be reaffirmed but redefined in broader terms. Implicit in the implementation of this was a need to broaden the concept of education 'to focus in greater depth on how it can support the total development of the child. ... The wider definition of education would include not only pre-school education in language and cognitive development but also, depending on the setting, health education, education for improved hygiene and nutrition, social and cultural development.'

The implications of these statements were profound: that Foundation activity should now extend far beyond purely school-bound education, even in the broadest sense, to include, for example, projects focusing directly on the child; the family; the micro-community and the macro-community.

This then represents the policy of BvLF at the present time and there can be no argument but that the fundamental objective has been maintained; it has at the same time been clarified and reinforced. The major changes in policy have been towards making much more precise the nature of the target groups, by focusing on the whole developing child and by aiming to work with a variety of institutions and disciplines concerned with the enhancement of that development. Education has remained the fundamental strategy, but education includes as its object not merely the child but also the parents as educators and other significant people whose activities relate to the impairment, amelioration or preferably betterment of conditions relevant to the child's probability of attaining his or her full potential. In brief: the remit is now related to the child's total background and especially to the social factors which impinge on that background.

INVOLVING PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES

The 1983 to 1986 period was characterised by a marked rise in the number of projects and the total amount of grants made compared to the previous full period (1977-1980). One hundred and five new projects were funded at a total of almost 28,000,000 adjusted guilders as against 75 projects funded at 23,000,000 adjusted guilders in the earlier period.

A spectacular shift, clearly reflecting both the trends from previous periods and the emphasis on the new policy of the eighties, was to be seen in the balance among target groups, both in terms of the proportion of numbers of projects and funds. The proportion of funds to pure pre-school projects, which had been lower than that to projects involving parents and the community for the first time in 1977 to 1980, fell in 1983 to 1986 to less than a quarter of all funds and about one-third of the projects. It is true that the school as an institution remained a key element in the great majority of cases, but nonetheless the planned, direct involvement of parents and communities had become a dominant feature of the great majority of the projects in the 1980s. Table 7 illustrates some of these shifts.

As a result of the deliberations on the eighties' programme, it was clear that many projects would be aimed directly at specific target groups. One such group was children in single parent families. During the period, five projects – in the USA, Jamaica, Dominica, The Netherlands and Japan – were supported which focused on single parent families, usually headed by teenage mothers. Apart from the fundamental facts suggested by this broad title, the target groups had certain characteristics in common and in a more restricted way, there was a common problem. In detail however, there were highly specific problems to be solved in equally specific fashions since the social and cultural situation, particularly the attitudes of other persons, differed considerably from one context to the next. The range of available solutions in each situation was also different, yet all the projects fell well within the typological range of the BvLF model. Two of the projects, those in the USA and Dominica are described in some detail.

THE SOUTH BRONX PROJECT IN THE USA

The general nature of the disadvantage, applicable with minor modifications to all other groups in the cluster, may be seen in the proposal made to the Trustees (BvLF, Proposal, 1984a) for a project in the South Bronx in New York City, where:

Table 7: Grants and No. of ECE/ECCE Projects by Region, by Location Within Country, by Target Group, and by Type of Institution – 1983-1986 (in 000s of adjusted guilders to 1965 base)

	ECE GRANTS IN ADJUSTED GUILDERS (000s)	AVERAGE VALUE OF GRANT	GRANTS AS % OF TOTAL ECE GRANTS	NUMBER OF ECE PROJECTS
TOTALS FOR THE PERIOD	27767.1	264.4	100.0	105
REGIONS				
Latin America	5828.6	306.8	21.0	19
Caribbean	1814.7	226.8	6.5	8
Asia & Oceania (incl. Australia & Japan)	2262.3	226.2	8.1	10
Africa	3130.4	260.9	11.3	12
Europe & Others (incl. USA & Israel)	14186.2	272.8	51.1	52
International (more than 1 country)	544.9	136.2	2.0	4
LOCATION WITHIN COUNTRY				
Urban	10050.7	245.1	36.2	41
Rural	7479.9	241.3	26.9	31
Mixed	10236.4	310.2	36.9	33
TARGET GROUPS				
Pre-schools	6593.3	199.8	23.7	33
Pre-school + parents	14714.8	313.1	53.0	47
Pre-School + parents + community	4022.6	268.2	14.5	15
Community	2436.6	243.7	8.8	10
TYPE OF INSTITUTION				
Universities	7865.4	262.2	28.3	30
Governments	10802.1	263.5	38.9	41
Voluntary organisations	9102.4	267.7	32.8	34

more than one-third of the 112,000 births in 1983 were to unmarried women, most of them teenagers. The most dramatic increase in single parent families has taken place in low income neighbourhoods such as Harlem and the South Bronx. Most services addressing the needs of

> adolescent parents focus on the mechanics of pregnancy and postnatal adoption. Little attention is paid to the immediate or long term needs, either of the parents themselves or of their children. Traditionally, pregnant girls were excluded from school; later they were offered 'home-bound' instruction; still later they were offered 'school-bound' programmes which isolated them from the general high school population. ... The mother who returns to school sees her child either in the infant centre taken care of purely by 'experts' or she hands it over to the care of another. The programmes existing made little or no attempt to include the teenage father. Where child care facilities exist, little use is made of them as a learning centre at which young parents could be helped to explore, challenge and reflect on traditions and practices of child rearing.

The project proposed working within the standard high schools – 10 per cent of whose populations were already parents. The target was the entire school community: teachers, pupil-parents, other pupils and the infants. There was no policy of rejection of anyone and the project sought to foster thoughtful decision making on the part of teenage parents and their peers, with regard to parenthood, real and prospective; help teenagers interact with young children and realise the difference between rearing children and merely leaving them to grow up; produce practical parent education material based on real experience at the grass roots level; develop school-linked child care facilities into practical learning centres, emphasising children's emotional, intellectual and social needs as well as the physical aspects; and involve older community residents with young people in the work of the centres to provide leadership and sound role models in the parent education programme.

In terms of the Foundation's operational model this was something of a test case. Certainly the emphasis was on the development of the whole child – and on the whole adolescent parent for that matter. Early childhood education services were being devised in cooperation with the total community, both in the sense of the high school community as such and, to some extent, of the surrounding neighbourhood which supports the school and provides some additional services. There can be little doubt that in this project, as in the others outlined, one clear objective was the growth and improvement of the parents themselves. The hope

– the belief – was that such a programme would also benefit the children.

YOUNG MOTHERS IN DOMINICA

Dominica presented many of the problems of a subsistence economy in an exaggerated form: malnutrition, poor health facilities, inadequate housing, lack of educational or employment opportunities. To these were added a high rate of illegitimacy, which contributed to a rapidly increasing population, over 50 per cent of which was under the age of 15 (BvLF, Proposal, 1971c). This was exacerbated by the fact that apart from the two or three relatively small towns, such as Roseau, the capital, most of the people lived in small extended family groups, scratching for a living on small areas of impoverished soil. The situation of the most disadvantaged teenage mothers in such circumstances was grim indeed:

> The tradition in this island ... has been for young women to drop out of school early in order to have their first child. They have no job training or skills and often are driven to have more children to receive some degree of economic support from the fathers. Such unmarried women (an estimated 61 per cent) therefore live a precarious existence. Children brought up in this haphazard way tend to follow their mother's example. ... There is unacceptably high infant mortality and also an extraordinarily high level of infant malnourishment (BvLF, Proposal, 1985a).

The methods proposed by the Social Centre – which has long worked with the Foundation on other projects related to early childhood – for alleviating the situation reflected the low level of sophistication of the people and the realisation by the local project team of the most effective ways of working with the Dominican community. This was an excellent example of the way in which local skills, initiative and ideas can combine effectively with advanced knowledge and techniques. There were two allied strategies, one home-based and aimed at families and communities and the other located in the school system and targeted at the at-risk population.

The first set of activities proposed finding local women with experience in skills in raising children in effective ways who had also shown some interest in and skill at working with young people. This group would then be trained as para-professional home visitors and would aim to reach the eventual clientele by means of a home-based programme worked out in collaboration with the early childhood

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educators on the island, the project staff and some of the mothers. The second set of activities involves working intensively with the teachers and the parents of young adolescents at risk and then a solid programme of adolescent counselling combined with parent programmes as part of the normal school curriculum. As might be expected in a society such as that of Dominica, the education system placed considerable emphasis on academic learning and thus a major teacher education programme was also included.

Projects in Jamaica, The Netherlands and Japan

The situation in Jamaica was very similar to that described in Dominica, and the Jamaican Women's Bureau approached the Foundation for assistance with a project to promote parenting skills and understanding among pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers with the emphasis on the role of the parent and family as prime educators; develop an experimental day care centre involving parents, with associated home visiting, using experienced parents as para-professional counsellors; develop a preventive family life education programme directed at teenagers of both sexes at school, teenage parents and teacher trainers; and develop teaching and learning materials to support this.

In The Netherlands, the disadvantage was not dissimilar to that encountered in the Bronx, with the significant difference that the young Dutch people were, for the great part, drop-outs, whereas the mothers in the Bronx, Jamaica, Dominica and Japan were, in a real sense, cast out by their families. Most of these Dutch adolescents had chosen to withdraw. The essential problem, although complicated by other issues such as drugs, prostitution and petty crime, was however the same: inadequate young parents with infants at risk. The basic project strategy was thus to encourage the young people to take advantage of available resources, while at the same time endeavouring to make those resources more relevant and more attractive to the perceived needs of the groups at risk.

The Japanese situation was totally different in its origins but similar in its effects on the mothers and children. According to Japanese practice when marriage breaks up the wife is by definition at fault; the husband remains in the family home. The wife must seek new accommodation, not easy for low paid female workers in the big cities. Unlike the Jamaican, Dominican, American and Dutch mothers and their children, the Japanese situation is inherent in the basic mores of Japanese society and it must be emphasised that the situation

is accepted by the women themselves. Thus to the feelings of inadequacy and helplessness common to all five groups is added a burden of guilt.

Since the entire syndrome is endemic to the system, any project, almost by definition, had to be small-scale, low-key, built on to an existing accepted programme which itself presented no threat to established social norms. In essence, the project operates directly out of the residential centres established by the Social Welfare Council.

DISSEMINATING POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Dissemination may be used to mean a deliberate attempt to have methods and techniques found useful in one project adopted in a new context and on a far wider scale. In general, perhaps stimulated by the success stories in Jamaica and Trinidad, the Foundation had earlier assumed that if the objectives of a project had been triumphantly or even moderately well achieved, they would more or less automatically be picked up by responsible authorities, usually government. The many discussions during the seventies about sustainability of change and about horizontal spread certainly made this assumption. For the most part, particularly in the developing world, it was a mirage.

Experimental projects in any field – medicine, agriculture, industry alike – are almost invariably much more successful than their full development. To invest substantial funding in a different, innovative programme, particularly when it runs against the grain of tradition, is a considerable step for any government. Moreover, spread of the idea involves the development of new administrative structures, new techniques for delivery systems, new training procedures and so on. Such activities take time, effort, allocation of funds and a further element of risk taking. For these and many other reasons, sometimes political, sometimes social, authorities have often been slow to take up the BvLF models, however successful they may have been, however strongly supported and applauded by those very authorities they may have been.

In consequence, the Foundation has accepted the logic that in some instances at least, it would have to take up the challenge and work with governments and other bodies to ensure proper dissemination of the methodologies and techniques of successful projects. Two of these joint projects are described below: Ate-Vitarte in Peru and Mingardo in Italy.

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ATE-VITARTE IN PERU

The Ate-Vitarte project concentrated on a shanty area of Lima in Peru. Its inhabitants were principally part of the urban drift from rural areas characteristic of Latin America as a whole in the last two decades or so. The area lacked the most basic services, with major problems of health, nutrition and sanitation. Unemployment was high and increasing. Before the start of the project, educational services, particularly for the young child, were very limited. In its initial six years the original project acquired a reputation as an example of a low-cost programme drawing on community efforts both in day to day execution and its physical construction. The project identified and trained local women to work as para-professionals in community-provided pre-schools and, by making use of traditional forms of community self-help, encouraged support for low-cost early childhood education centres, which also helped to promote a greater self-concept and pride among deprived parents (BvLF, Proposal, 1984c).

The dissemination programme has attempted to develop four main essential features: the transformation of the project's present centre in Ate-Vitarte into a national training and demonstration centre with a resource and documentation unit, for non-formal community-based pre-school education; training of professionals engaged in coordinating, supervising and administering such education programmes, with a special focus on strategies to promote the community's participation in education as well as to identify, select and train/supervise para-professionals; the development of related training materials; and collaboration with the Ministry of Education and a select group of teacher training colleges in the elaboration of a study programme to prepare teachers for work in the non-formal sector.

The decisions for dissemination and the objectives of the much wider programme were arrived at after a very careful evaluation of the six years of the original project by a distinguished Latin American educator, Dra. Martha Llanos. Her conclusions were in general laudatory, referring to two major areas of impact in the most positive of terms. She recommended a major effort at dissemination of the methodology, particularly in selection and training of personnel, both professional and para-professional. Dra. Llanos' study was followed by a Foundation project review whose report made similar recommendations. Following these reports the Ministry of Education (BvLF, Letter, 1986)

itself proclaimed Ate-Vitarte as the example of community-based early childhood education in urban settings and requested further Foundation cooperation to extend and diffuse the methodologies to other similar contexts and throughout the Ministry's relevant services.

At first sight, this dissemination draws back from direct involvement with children and their families in order to maximise the training of supervisors, trainers/coordinators, para-professionals and students in their final year at teacher training colleges. Even the 31 established centres in the first programme were to be used as a special demonstration area. It was intended that the participants in all courses at every level would work in these centres as part of their training programme. It might well be suggested that this was returning to the discarded idea of model centres.

However the project also envisaged the development of a series of sub-projects or sub-centres in differing areas of Lima and other urban centres throughout Peru. Through these it was hoped to reach parents who would work in the same way as in Ate-Vitarte itself. That is, there was to be dissemination, not only of a methodology, but also of a philosophy.

This was essentially an example of macro-dissemination, of development to communities and families outside the immediate physical range of the original project. It was highly probable that the social and cultural disadvantage of the primary target groups was shared widely in the new community at which the dissemination was aimed.

MINGARDO IN ITALY

This was not as true of the proposed dissemination phase for the project in southern Italy based on the mountainous area of Mingardo. The conditions in that area were not common throughout the south of Italy in general, let alone the country as a whole. The original project took place in a mountain community and had developed a unique administrative structure and methodology to meet the specific needs of the remote high valleys and mountain ridges. Part of the problem according to the proposal was that because the responsibilities for many services were vested in provincial lowland cities with a different cultural and social tradition from those of the mountains, when they were available, they were often irrelevant to the needs and problems of the mountains. The original project had encountered many

difficulties arising from this situation, but had managed to solve them in its own particular way. In consequence the dissemination project itself was also firmly located in the heart of the region and set up its own specific and quite special procedures.

The proposal for the first project, supported from 1979 to 1985, was founded on a fascinating fact. In earlier years Foundation support had been given to projects in northwestern Europe and in the cities of northern Italy for immigrants from the south of Italy. The Mingardo proposal took the problems back to their origins, to the backward region which the people had left in search of employment for the adults and a better life for their children. Nonetheless a good deal had been learned during the earlier projects about the nature of the problem and about specific difficulties of the mountain people.

The central government itself was well aware of the challenge and programmes had been directed towards improvement. These 'activities however, have mainly taken the form of physical and infrastructural development – roads, hospitals, schools, clinics etc.' (on a familiar World Bank/bilateral aid model) and there was 'little awareness of the need to take into account human and social factors in development; in particular for education to enable the local population to deal with the problems of their own environment' (BvLF, Project Report, 1985). The project began by designing a plan of action in consultation with the local authorities and parents. The project could not be regarded by the local people as being parachuted from outside.

The methods of work included: training programmes for teachers, especially those of young children; work with parents in techniques of child rearing on the one hand and cooperation with the school on the other; development of curricula related to the environment based on child-centred environmental research; integration of health and nutritional services with the activities of the school's new programme. This programme worked and the project review report recommended wider dissemination, but on a limited regional scale whose problems including resources and their lack, were much the same as those in Mingardo. It was proposed to transfer the Mingardo experience to an entire region within a somewhat shorter time span. In addition, greater emphasis was to be placed on child rearing practices for the very

youngest of children. This new emphasis was dictated by the evidence of 'unusually high infant mortality rate in the target area' (BvLF, Project Report, 1985).

The methodology was very much on the earlier pattern. The approach to curricula was sustained and continued and some cautious steps were taken towards training of mothers as para-professionals.

The earlier project had revealed an even greater health and nutritional problem than had been foreseen. As a result attempts were made to pay attention to the area of prenatal, perinatal and postnatal services, partly to make existing services more aware of the particular problems and partly to make women in the area understand and use those services available to them. 'Equally stress will be placed on measures possible in the home in the area of nutrition and hygiene in attempting to thus counteract traditions and taboos in order to reduce the abnormal incidence of infant death in the community' (BvLF, Proposal, 1985d).

And finally, in this brief review of projects in the period 1983 to 1986 it is instructive to examine two projects which are much nearer to the traditional BvLF line although each has highly innovative aspects to it.

ABORIGINAL CHILDREN IN AUSTRALIA

Among the first activities supported by the Foundation in the years 1965 to 1968 were projects for Aboriginal children in Australia. It is therefore appropriate to select in the final group another project for Australian Aboriginal children, this time in the north of the country. Legally the status of Aboriginal people has altered for the better during the intervening years. Yet the picture remained one of a depressed and deprived community, strangers in their own land. Infant mortality and malnutrition rates were much higher than those for white children; the probability of completing secondary schooling was less than two per cent and the numbers of tertiary graduates could probably be counted in tens rather than in terms of the thousands their proportion of the community would suggest; unemployment rates were unacceptably high; worse still the chances of obtaining work, even the most unskilled labour, were far lower than for white youngsters. In such circumstances the incidence of alcoholism was high and the rates of petty crime were far above those of the white population of similar ages. Shanty or slum housing, limited sanitation, inadequate waste

disposal, poor water supplies were characteristic of their living conditions. Given such deplorable conditions, it was not surprising that methods of child care and parenting were also poor. Many of these people were caught between the old nomadic hunting and gathering culture and the slum shanty town culture of the poorest end of the white society. They had learned neither the skills of their own people nor to use the best skills of the white.

The official project title is 'Leadership and Management for Aboriginal early childhood education', and it plans to deal with optimal methods of assuring the fruitful participation of minorities in their own development; how institutional variables can be altered to improve social inequality; how programme experience in early childhood education can be disseminated. Specifically, its objective is to 'influence Aboriginals to interact with the young child – clan leaders, parents, teachers, health personnel or welfare workers – to have a coordinated and sustained impact on the child and to promote the first organised truly Aboriginal response to meeting the needs of their children' (BvLF, Proposal, 1984d).

This was the first time that a totally Aboriginal group had set out to improve the living conditions of its own people. The project was designed by a group of highly professional Aboriginal people and run by them in collaboration with the communities themselves. Very much in line with the Foundation's own belief, this project team, directed by the Aboriginal Training and Cultural Institute (ATCI), has asserted (BvLF, Proposal, 1984d) that interventions are more effective when all relevant sectors are involved; management and resource utilisation can be made more effective through quality training and follow-up programmes; specific strategies need to be developed consciously in order to facilitate the applications of research results to local contexts meeting local needs with limited resource availability; and work with minorities implies the need for self-management.

Following a detailed study of a number of communities and discussions with the people in the light of its own experience in a number of projects, ATCI came to the view that the most appropriate methodology, in line with the greatest need, is leadership and management training. One of the difficulties of using available resources and of taking proper advantage of the new services on offer is that very few Aboriginal people have the necessary background and skills. The same is true of

a clinic or a school. All too many institutions have found that in a considerable number of countries, not only in Australia, there was a lack of the necessary leadership, organisational or managerial skills to run them. At a different level, but in the same conceptual framework, many households have broken down because of inadequate management and techniques of parenting, particularly when these have to take place in unfamiliar cultural surroundings. This is even more true among people whose traditional culture, although spiritually and, in a highly specific way, technically, are of a high level of sophistication, is essentially nomadic. There are no managerial traditions, few parenting skills appropriate to a settled existence, that is, there are no role models.

The Institute sought 'to infiltrate leadership widely among the Aboriginal community proper upon which improved community-controlled early childhood work could be built.' The Institute has had to develop original and non-formal training and teaching methods. They revolve around short-term workshops and semi-formal residential programmes for leaders and potential leaders, followed by interactive demonstration sessions within the communities. The participants in both sets of activities are drawn from known and potential leaders of the communities, preferably with some official status in education, health, nutrition or community development. Teaching techniques are a judicious and often novel blend of traditional and Western methods with many of the materials developed and produced by the people themselves in the course of their workshops.

This project is dedicated to the child in the community; the school is central as part of the total environment but is no more than this. The emphasis is on interaction with the people to operate within their own environment and to enhance that environment in the interests of the developing child.

BLACK CHILDREN IN ALABAMA

The other project to be briefly described is quite different although, like the Aboriginal children, the target groups are black and disadvantaged minorities in their own land. They are of considerable interest in that they hark back to the programmatic origins of BvLF in Head Start, since the project is directed to impoverished black children in a depressed area in Alabama in the United States. It seeks substantially to upgrade a network of child day care centres throughout the state. In considering the proposal, the

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Foundation's staff commented that: 'the centres are small, free-enterprise efforts somewhat reminiscent of Jamaica's Basic Schools.' To become involved with them was thus not only to go back to the conceptual roots of Head Start, it was also to return to the programme challenges of its first major project – young disadvantaged children in inadequate, locally organised institutions.

The case for the project was a strong one. To quote the proposal (BvLF, Proposal, 1986c):

> The educational prospects and indeed life chances of black children throughout Alabama continue to be very low in comparison with children of all ethnic groups in other states outside the south. Infant mortality actually rose in Alabama in 1984. Most black children ... do not complete high school. Levels of illiteracy are persistently high. ... For blacks, poor educational foundations and home backgrounds ill supportive of education lead inevitably to poor life prospects. The poverty cluster is self renewing – school failure, unemployment, vulnerability to drug addiction, vandalism and violence ultimately help this apathy.

The Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama (FOCAL) is a private group within the black community, devoted to maintaining quality in day care and its members are concerned that the economic situation is reducing its capability. In their letter to the Foundation the proposers wrote:

> Economic strictures mean that FOCAL is unable to provide the day care network with the kind of impulses which would demonstrate what the system is capable of achieving by way of positive early education for the poorest black children. FOCAL therefore now proposes ... a limited demonstration exercise located in the heart of the black-belt, concentrating on raising the quality of day care through in-service teacher training, administrative back-up, the enrichment of the family environment of day care children through education programmes and direct involvement of parents in day care work.

This plainly meant a change in objectives, a major effort on the part of FOCAL and its centres to introduce a considerable degree of education in the day care system. It meant, in an

important sense, attempting to do what the earlier Head Start programmes had been established to accomplish in pre-school centres as such. The major difference was the emphasis on work with mothers and with the family.

One problem for FOCAL, as long before for the Jamaican Basic Schools, was that the existing staff of the centres did not have the necessary background and skills to introduce and run a programme of the kind implicit in these objectives. 'Staff qualifications are minimal, centre "directors" normally being community women of good will and no more. The younger staff tend to have at most a high school diploma' (BvLF, Proposal, 1986c).

This meant a carefully planned programme of 'teacher education and training' directed towards 'organisational problems; improved teaching content and method; attitude change among professionals and para-professionals alike.'

FOCAL hoped that curriculum development and parent education programmes could take place within its own headquarters and this too implied a major effort towards changing the methods and techniques of education used there: from day care, the focus had to become education.

The project demonstrates, in its planning at least, the total commitment to the central objective and to the development of a flexible yet innovative attitude towards different ways of obtaining this objective. If the Alabama plan succeeds, it will offer new possibilities of attaining for black children in the South the dream of which Martin Luther King spoke and, what is more, of attaining it by the efforts of the black communities themselves.

SEMINAR: MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES

Two international seminars and a major workshop during this period served to reinforce and crystalise some of the policy decisions that were under discussion at this time and which were being put into operation in some of the projects.

The first of the seminars, on the topic of 'Multicultural Societies: Early Childhood Education and Care', was held in June 1984, in Granada, Spain with the cooperation of the Fundación General Mediterránea. This represented something of a change in policy in that participants were selected, at least in part, on the basis of specific expertise

– that of working with minorities and migrants in early childhood care and education – rather than general project direction. There were 31 project leaders and independent specialists as well as representatives from UNESCO, the Organisation of American States, OECD and national observers.

The choice of theme was based on the new approach presented in *The Programme for the Eighties*. One of the major themes on which the Foundation proposed to work in the decade was multicultural societies and the introduction to the report on the seminar (BvLF, 1984) reads:

> Major international trends point to reduced levels of attainment and increased levels of stress among many children from minority cultural backgrounds, and tensions between majority and minority communities. Conversely early childhood is the critical period when it is possible to work preventively with young children and families, and to align intervention efforts closely with the family and community setting to promote a more productive experience of life and learning.

The seminar reached a clear consensus that multiculturalism is a major issue in modern societies, particularly in Europe. There was perhaps an over-emphasis on the European model and on the concept of born-to-fail. The quite different varieties of multiculturalism and communalism which exist in many (if not, indeed, most) Asian and African societies barely raised a mention and yet these are giving rise to issues of great moment in the modern world.

There was, secondly, a rejection of the old theories of assimilation of minorities, particularly linguistic minorities, into the so-called mainstream culture of the modern national state. To quote the first paragraph of the report (BvLF, 1984):

> Increasingly, the 'normative' approach reflected in the so-called 'melting pot' theory, is seen for exactly what it is – a strategy which itself brings disadvantage to children whose lifestyle, language, cultural heritage and social patterns do not conform to supposed national norms.

There was acceptance of the opposite view that cultural pluralism should be sponsored, encouraged and developed within each country.

There were some useful and worthwhile exchanges of views on ways in which parents and the community in general can become part of the total educational system.

A useful framework which has been followed with some success by builders of school-based programmes seeking to involve parents is:

Raising consciousness – a general climate of opinion is created that 'schooling' can become relevant to the needs of the whole community;

Collaboration – parents and others are gradually associated as collaborators in the general life of school and grow in understanding of their possible roles within it;

Involvement – parents become actively involved in the school in productive and creative ways; teachers are reinforced and their work transformed through this process;

Participation – parents contribute as genuine partners, in the school and in the classroom. They bring their own ideas and energies to bear on all aspects of the child's education.

The problem with such an approach, useful though it has been shown to be in many circumstances, is that the onus is usually placed on the parents themselves to interact with the school; they have to learn what the school is trying to do and then, if they accept the values, the attitudes, the methods of the school, to reinforce the school. On the other hand, if they reject them, opportunities are seldom given for parents to discuss alternatives with the school system and in particular with the teachers. The experience of the Foundation in a number of developing countries, particularly in the Caribbean and Latin America, is that such two-way interaction can be highly productive and can produce different teaching methods and different curriculum. This calls for a great deal of sensitisation and skill.

The seminar concluded on a cautionary note: 'The debate on multicultural education is far from over ... the issues are still only being investigated'. That is, the seminar was essentially, as was said earlier, a learning process, a clearing of the ground and a defining of the issues rather than a seminar which was

able to point new directions, particularly for the Foundation itself.

SEMINAR: THE PARENT AS PRIME EDUCATOR

The next seminar, which was held in Lima, Peru, in May 1986, picked up the theme of the importance of the family as an educational influence which had been so strongly stressed in the eighties' document and discussed in a number of earlier seminars. The title chosen was 'The Parent as Prime Educator: Changing Patterns of Parenthood'. Thirty seven project leaders and representatives of associated institutions were invited to attend from 18 countries, principally but not exclusively, in the region. Participants were chosen on the basis of their experience in family education, particularly when they had used non-formal or informal techniques in their programme. In addition, UNESCO, UNICEF, the Gulbenkian Foundation and 13 national observers, representing the major institutions concerned with early childhood in Peru, were present.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr W.H. Welling, Executive Director of the Foundation (BvLF, 1986a), who stressed that

> the fundamental assumption was that pre-school education delivered in centres by professionals in forms which merely reflect the approach to children aged seven and above is not a necessary part of the early education process. Parents are also perfectly capable – even if their level of formal education is not advanced – of performing well to enable them to act either as the deliverers of a non-formal pre-school programme or as home visitors, working as equals with families to help them resolve child rearing problems and support children's balanced development.

There was clear and important recognition of the notion that compensatory intervention programmes can be destructive in their effects rather than positive, unless parental assistance and participation are actively sought and encouraged. The paradox emerges, as has been found in many studies and in much of the Foundation's own work, that when parents do become involved in positive ways the emphasis shifts from intervention to interaction and from compensation to development. When this occurs the institutions themselves tend to change, just as families change in the ways in which they operate in relation to institutions and in dealing with their own children. There was also some forthright discussion

of the role of the mass media in assisting in work with families and with children and a number of the difficulties and dangers inherent in what was called the new 'opiate of the masses'. Unless mass media programmes are carefully designed to fit in with the curriculum and methods of the non-formal, as well as the formal system, the results are likely to be counterproductive. Nonetheless, given the difficulties of teacher education and family education using professional workers in most of the developing world, mass techniques must be used but this means that new ideas, new ways of using the media must be developed. If this happens the effect is not only on education, in the narrow sense, it is on community development as a whole.

A number of participants pointed to the special problems arising because of the major movements from rural areas into the cities and the consequent rise of shanty towns with all the difficult problems of assimilation which attach to them. Such populations are often detached from their own family and community structures and from the values that go with this. Families, mothers in particular, are increasingly isolated in particularly difficult ways. New values and ideas of child rearing are introduced by the school system, by the mass media, by neighbours of a different kind from different cultures, by authoritative figures and so on. All of these can give rise to confusion and conflict and may cause special problems for families and in particular for young women with infants. In consequence, expectations are low, techniques of mothering are poor and there is all too often little opportunity for the young woman to realise 'some degree of self-worth or personal achievement. On a daily level the constant demands of her child for which she receives little or no preparation inhibits social contact with others and the transfer of know how on child rearing'. The problems of education in the broad sense become very different under such circumstances and new methods, new ways must be found. The seminar explored issues of this kind in some depth and although no definitive conclusions were reached (indeed they have not been reached anywhere), nonetheless the opening up of the issues reflected the new problems facing the Foundation.

In particular there was a long and spirited discussion of the relative merits of formal and non-formal models under such circumstances. On the one hand, it is evident that any solution to the problems must be found within the societies themselves. On the other it is clear that highly skilled

professionals must be prepared to work with such families in such societies and communities in order to help them to find these solutions.

This becomes difficult when the parents themselves are often illiterate or semi-literate with little contact with people or institutions able to help them to learn these new ideas and new ways. It implies also that the family, in an important sense, cannot be just the *object* of education. To resort to such a view is to return to the philosophy of compensation and intervention.

Models must be developed which can be readily disseminated and, at the same time, adapted to differing conditions. The multiplication of small-scale projects is not, in the long run, a good answer, particularly since most small projects tend to be more or less generously funded both in terms of money and in the availability of resource personnel. The Foundation's experience in many countries is that the more small-scale, the more closely knit a project is, the less likely are its findings to have broader application. Planning for dissemination must take place at the beginning of the project and not at the end.

The 1984 Hague Workshop

In February 1984 the Foundation held a workshop of a very different kind at its headquarters in The Hague. A group of six women and six men – all of whom were or had been senior project directors – were invited from as many countries and from wide and disparate backgrounds, united essentially by a commitment to disadvantaged young children and to education in its broader sense as a basic strategy for preventing or alleviating the causes and consequences of that disadvantage. The purpose of the gathering was to discuss common problems and unique solutions and to attempt to discover whether there was some common set of concepts, of beliefs, of strategies and tactics, of methods, of methodologies. In a different mode, this was another attempt to discover whether there is in practice a BvLF style, a BvLF model.

The participants focused on the philosophy underlying the Foundation's policy for the eighties. To a large extent, it was accepted as an article of faith; any modifications and extensions which were made in the light of theoretical ideas or field experience were of the nature of commentaries rather than a new testament.

In addition to these glosses, some points of importance for Foundation programmes were made by the participants. Perhaps most important of all was the recognition, indeed the assertion, that while the general principles may hold good across projects wherever they may be, nonetheless each project is unique to its own community and to the culture in which it is instituted. A solution which works effectively in one situation may have disastrous consequences in another, not only indeed in different countries but in different towns or even different communities within the same country. Each project must be able to work out its own salvation and not depend on imposed programmes, as is implicit in the concept of intervention.

There was also a great deal of discussion of the idea of low-cost programmes. On a number of occasions the argument has been made that early childhood education activities in communities and in families need not be as expensive as institutionalised formal education. In general this may be true but it does carry with it a real danger, the danger that in the name of economy and low cost, teachers' salaries and funds for para-professionals, equipment and materials will be kept to such a low level that the effectiveness of the programme is gravely compromised. In education, as in everything else, quality is expensive.

Finally, inevitably, the question was raised as to whether programmes for adolescents might not be as important or even more important for the Foundation than projects in early childhood education. This point of view was argued on two grounds: first, that on a great deal of the available evidence, adolescence, puberty is as important a breakpoint in development as is early childhood. Secondly, it was asked whether in these times of economic recession and strained education and employment resources, adolescents are not as important a target group as young children. In very general terms, the participants in the seminar agreed that both periods are important, even vital, but if there has to be a choice, then probably it should be with the young child.

This was an exciting and seminal meeting for the Foundation, not so much for the new ideas which were germinated as for the reinforcement, the assertion of the value of those ideas which have guided the development of the Foundation since 1965. The participants were independent men and women with, for the most part, a good deal of authority and

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responsibility within their own countries. It was therefore more than important for the Foundation to hear a unanimous broad endorsement of the principles which have guided its activities. In a real way this was evaluation at its best.

Although this study only covers the years 1965-1986, it is worthwhile to touch briefly on developments in 1987 and 1988. By necessity, comments pertaining to such recent history are impressionistic, but nonetheless useful in helping to round out the story of the Foundation's work.

While it is still too soon to attempt to characterise the period from 1987 to 1990 with a single adjective, it may well prove to be a time of 'maturity' for the Foundation. The vast field experience in a variety of settings, the rich collection of data which has been generated, and the constant exploration into effective practical measures by which the theories of child development can be applied, have provided the Foundation with a broad and deep understanding and sensitivity about the means to combat disadvantage in early childhood.

As the reputation of the Foundation has grown and spread, becoming increasingly recognised as a body both knowledgeable about early childhood education and care and experienced in the design and development of projects for the prevention and amelioration of disadvantage, so has the demand for its advice grown. In this process, the Network has been actively and positively exploited. The broadening of the knowledge base, both conceptually and in terms of methodology, together with the availability of a number of well-qualified men and women with a great deal of field experience in innovative projects is an exceptional resource. It has meant that the Foundation has emerged as a total system, uniquely abl.. to provide the kinds of information and advice needed by governments, specialised agencies, private institutions – in short, all those concerned with the welfare and development of disadvantaged children.

Project dissemination

The concept of project dissemination which has been inherent from the first projects supported has continued to be an important strategy for reaching greater numbers of disadvantaged children. Yet, quality not quantity, remains the

prime strategy. Dissemination indeed is used in two senses by the Foundation:

a) facilitation of the deliberate introduction of policies, structures, methods, techniques and so on, developed in one project, to other projects, within the same society or to larger units within an education system; and

b) the spread of information about such policies and practices and the philosophy which lies behind them, by means of seminars and workshops or through publications of various kinds, and, increasingly, by the employment of advisory missions, particularly for programme development purposes.

DEVELOPMENTS IN 1987 AND 1988

Among the newer dissemination projects that have been supported, the request by the government of Trinidad and Tobago to SERVOL to play a major role in the development of a national non-formal comprehensive education programme, based on the 16 years of SERVOL's innovative work, is one which is worthy of note. As a SERVOL staff member put it, 'suddenly all the years of pain and struggle were forgotten in the realisation that this heralded an important turning point in the history of developmental education in the republic' (BvLF Newsletter, No.48, 1987).

New projects in the People's Republic of China – to train a cadre of 'backbone teachers' who themselves will become teacher trainers at village level to help families create a healthier and more stimulating environment for their children; in Pakistan, where efforts are underway to work with young Afghan refugee children and their parents to develop low-cost community-based early childhood facilities and stimulate the overall development of children, paying particular attention to health, environmental and nutritional factors; and in New Zealand, which will work with communities of Pacific Islanders to develop and strengthen early childhood education in the home and in centres, all demonstrate the continuing willingness of the Foundation to explore new avenues to combat disadvantage.

Around the world, the Foundation Network of organisations involved in operating projects, and the people who staff those projects, have grown in strength and confidence. National and regional meetings have been held in many locations where there are several Foundation-supported projects, offering

valuable opportunities for the exchange of experiences, sharing of problems and of possible solutions, and for the stimulation of new ideas. At the same time, there has been an increasing interchange of staff visits from projects in different countries. A case in point is the visit of two staff from the training/retraining project for kindergarten teachers in Rabat, Morocco to the Ate-Vitarte project in Lima, Peru in 1986, followed by a reciprocal visit by two Peruvian staff to Morocco in 1987.

The seminar programme has continued to serve as a useful means of analysing in some depth particular topics in the field of early childhood education. A ninth Foundation seminar on 'Children at the Margin: a Challenge for Parents, Communities and Professionals' was held in Newcastle, Australia in 1987. It concluded that meaningful change in the lives of children, families and communities at the margin of society was unlikely to come about as a result of external interventions. Rather, it was more likely to emerge from the work of the community itself, in particular from the parents who have the greatest stake in the future through the children they have borne, working in partnership with professionals and para-professionals.

Communicating to a wider public

Centrally, the Foundation has embarked on a publication and media programme to encourage the exchange of information in the field of early childhood care and education. Although the Foundation began publishing its *Newsletter* in 1971, from 1987 it began appearing regularly four times a year, with each issue containing a series of articles around a major theme related to the work. Some of the themes covered include multiculturalism, the problems facing teenage parents, the importance of play in child development, health and nutrition, and home visiting. The *Newsletter* also contains articles and reports about Foundation activities at the headquarters' level and in the field, as well as frequent stories, descriptions and photographs of activities related to practical, day to day issues. Through its editorial column, it also provides an opportunity for the Foundation to express its own intellectual voice. To read through the successive statements headed 'A Word from Koninginnegracht'[1] is

[1] Koninginnegracht is the name of the street in The Hague where the Foundation had its office from 1971 to 1987.

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indeed to understand the gradual evolution of the basic philosophy of the Foundation. With the increasing number of projects located in Latin America and other Spanish-speaking countries, a Spanish-language selection of some of the major *Newsletter* features is now published each year in *Boletin Informativo*.

A clearing house established in The Hague has a specialist library of books and journals related to ECCE and maintains a set of Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) microfiches, supplemented by European materials. It is also directly linked with libraries in universities and similar institutions in The Netherlands. In consequence, it is able to provide bibliographies and abstracts on topics relating to project activities. Copies of articles and other materials difficult to obtain elsewhere can readily be prepared for project use. The formal activities such as preparation of specialised bibliographies have been discontinued in recent years, but the earlier record is impressive[1].

A project resources centre in The Hague maintains detailed records of the progress of all projects. It is thus able to provide comprehensive accounts of methods of implementation; examples of curriculum and materials to meet different needs; and photographs, graphics and audio-visual materials illustrating the projects and their activities. The information on ECCE now available in the Foundation's clearing house and resources centre is probably the most comprehensive data bank on the topic available anywhere in the world.

Drawing on those resources and the talents of project staff within the Network, the Foundation has launched a new series of *Occasional Papers* which address issues of major importance to policy makers, practitioners and academics concerned with meeting the educational and developmental needs of disadvantaged children[2].

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[1] Comprehensive working bibliographies were prepared and published on *Compensatory Early Childhood Education* (BvLF, 1971), on *Parent Involvement in Early Childhood Education* (BvLF, 1976); on *Evaluation Studies on Early Childhood Education Programmes* (BvLF, 1977); on *Bilingual Learning in Multiracial Societies* (BvLF, 1978b); and on *Distance Education* (BvLF, 1979b).

[2] Three such papers have been published: Barker, W., *Early Childhood Care and Education: the Challenge* (1987); Nimmicht, G., Arango, M.

Increasingly, projects have been making use of videos and other audio-visual materials for training and information purposes. Some of the best of these, together with specially commissioned films have been put together as a series on Alternatives in Early Childhood Education.

The Foundation's own staff complement has been strengthened in the areas of communications, research, training and evaluation, and it is anticipated that in future years even greater use will be made of the data generated by the project experiences.

A CONSISTENT OBJECTIVE

Before postulating further on possible future developments for the Foundation, it is worth briefly summarising the changes that have occurred over the years. Between 1965 and 1986, 292 projects for disadvantaged children in 36 countries have been supported with an expenditure of nearly 82 million adjusted guilders. If the computation were to be made in 1986 currency, the amount involved would approximate 260 million guilders.

Has there been a consistent objective? If so, do virtually all these projects constitute one configuration? To what extent does this configuration (if it exists) spell out in a typological range the variances that are likely to occur in the effort to obtain its overall objective?

The evidence presented on earlier pages is conclusive. There has been a consistent objective. There is a discernible configuration of projects which taken together define a typological range specifically designed to maximise the probability of attainment of the basic objective. The original statement in 1966 set the pattern, emphasising as it did the concepts of disadvantage, of social and cultural impediment to attainment of potential and of a project-based approach with education as the strategy. This early statement also placed an emphasis on intellectual or cognitive potential and spoke of compensating for or removing the stated impediments.

with Hearn, J., *Meeting the Needs of Young Children: Policy Alternatives* (1987); Watt, J., *Evaluation in Action: a case study of an under-fives centre in Scotland* (1988)

The first revision, published in 1973, retained the basic thrust while eliminating the notions of compensation and of concentration on cognitive potential. Later reviews, for example in the eighties' documents, have emphasised the positive aspects of the objective while firmly retaining the central purpose: the vision of the Foundation remains where it has faced since the sixties – the realisation of human potential among depressed, disadvantaged and deprived groups. Furthermore, the staff and the Trustees have consistently used adherence to this objective as their first and crucial criterion for accepting or rejecting an approach to them for funds for a project.

It is also pertinent to suggest that there has been a subtle shift in the statement of the basic objectives and the gloss put on it in Foundation documents. Whereas in the 1960s, consistent to some extent with the compensatory hypothesis, the emphasis was on the negative aspects – on disadvantage as such. It has increasingly shifted so that the later emphasis and the statements now tend very much to emphasise the positive aspects of any programme or project.

Flexibility

Beyond this, is there some kind of structural model determining the direction of funding to parallel the conceptual model derived from an analysis of the Statutes and decisions of the Trustees?

On the simplest of levels it is reasonable to say that there have been shifts in funding in the directions implied by the conceptual model, but that there is no clear structural model to parallel this. This is a positive, rather than a negative, aspect of the Foundation's activities. It is evidence of considerable flexibility. The Foundation has not developed a rigid bureaucratic structure for the administration of projects, but has been more than prepared to develop projects in terms of the situation as it is, in collaboration with the most appropriate institutional body. There is a great deal of evidence that many of the failures or partial failures of programmes and projects initiated or supported by UN organisations or as part of bilateral aid have largely been caused by attempts to impose an external structure in inappropriate conditions, to define target groups with greater precision than is warranted and to locate projects in accord with a generalised planning model which may have little relation to reality.

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In pursuit of its objective the Foundation has maintained education as its fundamental strategy; at the same time it has steadily developed along a series of parameters or dimensions of action. The limits of the range here are the formal and the non-formal systems. There has been a steady and perhaps even accelerating movement towards the latter. This is plainly and inevitably linked to the shift from school-based to community-based targets and to the increasing emphasis placed on all aspects of child development and not merely on compensation for intellectual or cognitive deprivation. It is however, more than this.

The movement is also linked with the methodologies of project delivery and in particular with the employment and use of para-professionals. In the early projects mothers and young women participated in classroom situations and, in many instances, formalised training programmes were designed for them – thus linking the formal with the non-formal. With the growing emphasis on community work, including health and nutrition and child rearing practices generally, there has been a parallel need for workshops, demonstrations, drop-in centres and the like using all the methods and techniques of non-formal education. There is in this the real danger that formal education and formal institutions will be denigrated and discounted, but in most projects the either/or situation has been avoided. The tendency is to maintain the formal but to complement this with well-designed non-formal programmes making the maximum use of local personnel and facilities.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE APPROACH

The characteristics which help to describe the model have not been set out in any specific way on earlier pages except that each has been discussed at some point and they have consistently influenced analysis of the material. They may briefly be summarised here as a means of discussing the variance of the typological range.

No attempt has been made to define these dimensions in any precise mathematical way, but it has been suggested that they may be characterised in terms of their limits:

> a movement from compensation for deficiencies to development of innate potential as the value dimension determining the nature of a curriculum of teaching methods, whether in a school, in the home or in the community;

a movement from intervention to interaction as the social dimension determining relationships with the child and his or her family and social community;

a movement from the cognitive or intellectual focus of development and interaction to the whole child as the psychological dimension determining the nature of activities; and

a movement from the institution to the community as the group with which it is most appropriate to work. This may be called broadly the instrumental dimension.

The Foundation itself claims that there is a *marque* which distinguishes its projects. It has been described rather than defined on occasions. Apart from the emphasis on the involvement on parents and the community, the unique pattern of characteristics includes:

the importance of the employment and training of para-professionals of many kinds;

the need to train such people as part of a team and not as individuals;

the vital importance of developing materials and equipment within projects and to have the equipment relevant to the methods and techniques of the project itself;

the predominant value of relating each programme to the values and needs of the specific group of children and their communities – the endogenous approach – and, almost as a corollary to this,

the minimal use of the outside expert.

These methodological characteristics, *mutatis mutandis*, pertain to the great majority of projects supported by the Foundation.

These sets of characteristics are not independent of each other: they are correlated, perhaps more critically there are probability relationships among them. For example – it would be easy to select other examples of a different order – if there is a shift from focus on the child as a pupil to the child as a person then there will be inevitably movement from a

school-based to a community-based target and *a fortiori* there will be a similar shift in weight from formal to informal methods of education, from compensation to development as an objective, from interventionist procedures to interaction with the members of the community in project definition and operation and so on. The project patterns change subtly but directly with any one decision. Much of the uniqueness of BvLF lies in its flexibility and its capacity to work with and for any given pattern provided it is likely to increase the probability of attaining the fundamental objective. The pattern of projects has been defined by the objective itself.

This flexibility, together with the endogenous approach, also increases the probability of dissemination in the Foundation's use of the term. When a government or local authority or whatever sees that an innovative pattern is not only successful in the sense of attaining its objectives with the target group but is also consonant with the values and needs of the people, then it is much more likely to accept, adopt and support it than when it is related to an alien, different set of mores. Examples of the failure of an apparently successful innovation to be accepted and adopted on a wider frame are all too common in the literature of the United Nations agencies and bilateral organisations – in many fields, including education.

Beyond the notion of a typological range of projects there are other characteristics of the Foundation which emerge in consideration of its activities and which merit consideration in this final chapter.

The Foundation was and is:

relativist rather than absolutist in its approach to the solution of problems;

environmentalist, in the sense that while it accepts the notion of innate potential the view is firmly taken that, to a very large degree, the total environment of the child can help or hinder the attainment of that potential;

to a very large extent projects are endogenously determined rather than externally imposed;

educationally oriented rather than related to medical models;

devoted to improvement of quality rather than of quantitative targets;

flexible in its methods and in its approach to proposals rather than being rigidly bound by a fixed model;

geographically restricted between countries but not within them;

oriented towards the development of the individual as a person rather than as a social statistic, emphasising the importance of projects directed towards the young child as the vital focal point for the prevention as well as the amelioration of disadvantage.

EVALUATION

Before any innovative set of procedures is adopted for wider use, those responsible must be assured that the programme has worked; that it is better in terms of some set of aims than current procedures – or even non-existent procedures. The criteria for any decision to introduce new programmes are frequently related to fundamental, social and human objectives but they are increasingly also related to economic parameters. Phrases like low cost and rate of return begin to be heard. Similarly, statements about projects and procedures whether published or spoken at a workshop tend to be framed round outcomes either of process or of product. In both instances what Bloom (1971) has called 'formative' and 'summative' evaluation is or should be involved. Any project needs to know from month to month, sometimes even day to day how it is doing. Its supporters, its potential funders, need to know at the end of the project how it has done. Rightly or wrongly, evidence is requested which is required before continuation or dissemination is funded or supported in other ways – but what kind of evidence? Internal or external evaluation? Running records or standardised tests? Qualitative information as against quantitative measures?

Questions such as these have been the subject of discussions at many seminars and workshops, within projects and inevitably within the staff and among the Trustees. No clear firm policy has emerged. Whether it could, whether in fact it should, is another matter. Given the community-based endogenous approach it may well be argued, and has been argued, that no general model of evaluation is possible in any detailed sense. The specific outcomes of projects can only be evaluated in therms of the project's own specific objectives.

Provided these are directly related to the fundamental objective of the Foundation – and the theme of the study reported in this book has been that this has almost invariably been the case – then the evaluation can also be interpreted in terms of that overall objective. This in turn would be to argue the need for some kind of evaluation at Foundation level which would be rather different from anything yet devised. Here perhaps is a topic for a special study and a seminar.

FUTURE TRENDS

And finally – *quo vadis?* At the most general and important levels it is safe to predict that the objective will remain inviolate. It is also reasonably safe to say that there will be steady development along the dimensions of the basic conceptual framework discussed earlier in these conclusions. In broad terms, too, the methodological marque will continue to characterise Foundation projects. Less confidently one could expect a greater emphasis on specific degrees of disadvantage, particularly in the industrialised world: single parent families, linguistic minorities, isolated and itinerant communities, for example. In the Third World, the direction may well be towards similar groups but in a more diffuse way and also to those communities which are being increasingly marginalised – slum children, shanty town children, village children, the children of internal migrants. More generally it takes no visionary skill to predict greater interdisciplinary activity: involvement with health, with nutrition, with sanitation at a community level. The Foundation's work over the last 22 years has moved steadily in these directions.

During that time, the task has become broader and more intense. Sadly, governments and international agencies and many national aid organisations have moved steadily in the direction of economic goals rather than human development for their activities, have narrowed rather than broadened their definitions of disadvantaged and deprived children and their families. As a direct consequence, the characteristics as well as the number of disadvantaged children are on the increase rather than the decrease. As economist John Kenneth Galbraith has pointed out, 'no error in the advice given to the developing countries in recent decades has rivalled that which placed investment in industrial apparatus ahead of the investment in human capital' (quoted in BvLF *Newsletter*, No.48, 1987) A similar comment could equally apply to the socalled developed countries where, in many instances, the more disadvantaged sectors of society have received scant support to combat the negative effects of economic policies.

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The only counter to this tendency lies in the activities of organisations of goodwill which will not only proclaim the humanistic values but will actively work for them as the Bernard van Leer Foundation has done and will continue to do. Even so, the Foundation is 'acutely conscious of the glaring discrepancy between the means at its disposal and the needs of the world's disadvantaged children' (BvLF, 1986b).

This year, 1988, is the last year in office of Dr Willem Welling, the Executive Director of the Foundation. This book might fittingly and properly be titled 'The Welling Years'. The record of service to which it bears witness is one of which he may well be proud.

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The following works were consulted in the preparation of this publication, although not all are directly referenced in the text. The bibliography is divided into five sections: A. books and articles (which are publicly available); and B. through E. (which are not publicly available). Section B. includes BvLF policy documents; C. lists project proposals; D. lists project reports and advisory mission reports; and E. lists letters to and from the Foundation.

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Beyond Child Survival: towards a new future	The Foundation's second Biennial Report covers activities during the years 1986 and 1987. The report includes feature articles on six projects in Mozambique, Singapore, Ireland, Italy, Trinidad and Colombia. Published October 1988, in English.
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Children at the Margin: a challenge for parents, community and professionals	Summary report and conclusions of the Third Eastern Hemisphere Seminar held in Newcastle, Australia in November 1987. Published February 1988 in English.
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The first in a series of Occasional Papers addressing issues of major importance to policy-makers concerned with meeting the educational and developmental needs of disadvantaged children. Published January 1987, in English.

Meeting the Needs of Young Children: Policy Alternatives

by Glen Nimnicht and Marta Arango M. with Lydia Hearn

The second Occasional Paper, which outlines several feasible alternatives that can be adopted to improve the coverage of early childhood care and education projects. Published April 1987, in English.

Evaluation in Action: a case study of an under-fives centre in Scotland

by Joyce Watt

The main body of this third Occasional Paper is the evaluation report of a Foundation-supported project in the United Kingdom. It is preceded by an examination of the issues involved in evaluation together with an explanation of the way in which this particular study was carried out. Published October 1988, in English.

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THE FOUNDATION
(continued from inside front cover)

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- Funds can be made available for projects organised and implemented by public authorities, academic and non-governmental, voluntary institutions.

- Grants are not made to individuals nor for general support to organisations. The Foundation does not provide grants for study, research or travel. No grants are made in response to general appeals.

- The Foundation recognises that projects in its field of work require time to develop and implement new approaches. Grants are normally made in cycles of three years. The long-term sustainability of a project is an important consideration in the appraisal of proposals.

- The Foundation does not prescribe a rigid formula for proposals. Potential applicants are advised to submit an outline before preparing a detailed document.

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